Montana is one of seven states that received four-year grants from the Lumina Foundation for Education to improve higher education productivity. This report describes Montana’s higher education productivity work between November 2009 and December 2010.

SPEC Associates prepared this evidence-based report to help stakeholders begin to answer two critical questions that drive the national evaluation: 1) what public will-building activities, advocacy efforts, policy changes, and systems or statewide practices will have an impact on higher education productivity, for whom and under what circumstances?, and 2) what public will-building activities, advocacy efforts, policy changes, and systems or statewide practices are likely to be sustainable, transferable and/or scalable?

We present our findings within the framework of the Four Steps to Finishing First as well as other factors we believe contribute to Montana’s progress in higher education productivity. This report does not make evaluative judgments about Montana’s work. Rather, it identifies trends that appear to either support or challenge the productivity activities in the state. SPEC will use this report, in combination with the reports from the other six states, to make evaluative judgments about the value and worth of Lumina Foundation’s productivity work at the national level.

We sincerely hope this report helps to shape the coming year’s action plans both at Lumina Foundation and in Montana.
Summary

During its Lumina grant year, Montana learned that its two-year sector, which includes the University of Montana System, Colleges of Technology, autonomous community and tribal colleges, is undersubscribed and underproductive. The state found that access, completion, transfer, efficiency, and affordability of postsecondary education were limited for Montanans by a fragmented delivery of its two-year institutional mission, inconsistent approaches to programming and funding, failure to meet adult and rural residents educational and training needs, and the lack of state-level coordination. These barriers to increased degree productivity will need to be overcome if Montana is to achieve its goal of increasing the state’s educational attainment level from thirty-five percent in 2008 to fifty-five percent by 2025. This will require an increase of 24,500 degree recipients. In order for the state to reach Lumina’s goal of sixty percent by 2025, an additional 112,354 degrees, averaging annual increases of 826 additional degrees, would need to be attained.

Montana's productivity work is branded College!Now which is the umbrella term for those initiatives undertaken by the state to increase the number of its citizens with postsecondary credentials. Steps One and Three of Lumina's Four Steps to Finishing First are the focus of Montana's four strategies supported by Lumina to increase degree attainment among its residents. The four strategies focus on the state's two-year institutions.

Two factors challenge Montana's two-year college initiative: the isolation of the state's population and a complicated higher education structure and governance system. In this system, the delivery of associate degree-level programs is offered on fifteen campuses governed by eleven governing boards. The University of Montana System, governed by seven gubernatorial appointees, is composed of five four-year institutions and five two-year colleges of technology. Some colleges of technology have their own administrations, while others are embedded within a four-year institution. Three autonomous community colleges have locally elected governing boards primarily serving specific geographic areas associated with their taxing district. In addition, Montana is home to seven self-governed tribal colleges. Montana’s productivity work is challenged by the need to obtain agreement on statewide initiatives from the institutional administrations and respective governing boards of the state’s two-year institutions.

The instate evaluation promises to provide insights that will be important to the national evaluation. The instate evaluation of College!Now includes a formative component that has a major focus on tracking the grant-supported policy change efforts. The instate evaluation also has a summative component that focuses on defining how each College!Now strategy is contributing to each of Montana’s productivity goals.
The Structure of Higher Education in Montana

Delegates to Montana's 1971 Constitutional Convention reorganized higher education and separated it from the state's elementary and secondary education system. Convention delegates established the Montana Board of Regents (BOR) as the constitutional governing agency for the Montana University System. The delegates also gave BOR responsibility for supervising and coordinating the state’s community college system. As a result, BOR has full power, responsibility, and authority to supervise, coordinate, manage, and control the university system. Convention delegates also created within the constitution a Commissioner of Higher Education with duties and responsibilities established by the regents. The Commissioner serves at the pleasure of BOR, but is not a member of the Governor’s cabinet.

BOR consists of ten members, seven appointed by the governor with the consent of the senate, and three members who serve in an ex-officio capacity through the elected office he or she holds. Of those appointed, six represent the public and one is a student. The ex-officio members include the commissioner of higher education, the state superintendent of public instruction and the governor. All appointed members serve seven-year terms. BOR has constitutional authority to plan for and coordinate the state’s system of higher education, review institutional budgets, recommend consolidated budgets, and review and approve programs for public senior institutions. It has statutory authority for the same functions for the state’s community colleges. Montana has no formal state-level organization for private colleges and universities. BOR and the Board of Public Education together compose the State Board of Education, a single entity that serves all levels of public education in the state (i.e., pre-K through post-secondary education).

Montana’s structure for higher education is complex. It consists of public universities with embedded and autonomous Colleges of Technology, three public community colleges, and seven tribal colleges. The Montana University System consists of the University of Montana and Montana State University. In addition to its flagship campus located in Missoula, which also houses a College of Technology, the University of Montana oversees the University of Montana-Western in Dillon and Montana Tech at Butte and its co-located College of Technology. The University also oversees a College of Technology located in Helena. Montana State University operates campuses in Bozeman, Billings, and Havre. The Billings campus also consists of the Billings College of Technology. Montana State University also oversees a College of Technology in Great Falls. In total, fifteen two-year institutions exist in Montana, although overall enrollments are low for the two-year sector in this mostly rural state.

The most recent data comparing statewide enrollments by level and control show that Montana’s public four-year colleges enrolled nearly 36,000 students, while the private four-year sector enrolled about 4,000 students all of whom were enrolled in private non-profit institutions. Private, for-profit two-year enrollments were less than 500 students. Public two-year enrollments including tribal colleges consisted of about 4,000 students.
Four Steps to Finishing First in Montana

Montana’s Lumina grant has four components.  

- Promote the community college mission to improve access, especially for targeted populations, in all two-year colleges in the state.
- Deploy Montana's two-year colleges as regional hubs for adult access, high school to college transitions, and workforce responsiveness.
- Coordinate curriculum and technology to expand access, promote readiness and completion, and improve efficiencies.
- Develop performance-based funding strategies.

Dr. Mary Sheehy Moe provided leadership for the Montana Board of Regents Lumina grant and the College!Now productivity initiatives until she retired from her positions on November 1, 2010. Dr. John Cech, Dean of the MSU-Billings College of Technology, became the Deputy Commissioner for Two-year and Community College Education and the College!Now Project Director as of January 1, 2011. David Hall has served as Coordinator for College!Now since January 2010. Other members of the College!Now leadership team include the presidents and chief executive officers of each community college and the four year campuses with a two-year (associate degree granting) mission. Advisors to the implementation team include thirty representatives from the Board of Regents, Governor’s Office, State Office of Economic Opportunity, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Montana Hospital Association, State Senate and Legislature, and the State’s Tribal Colleges.

In spring 2010, SPEC, the Montana Board of Regents, and the instate evaluator created a roadmap describing Montana's Lumina-funded productivity work and its expected outcomes. The roadmap, included at the end of this report, informed our understanding of Montana's grant work and influenced our comments in this report.

Step 1: Rewarding Institutions that Focus on Students’ Completing Quality Programs, Not Just Attempting Them

With support from the Lumina Foundation, Montana is developing a performance-based funding model scheduled for completion by July 2011 to be implemented with FY 2012 higher education budget request. The focus of the model is to reward institutions for promoting student success and degree completion.

The National Center for Higher Education Management assists the College!Now performance-based funding committee in developing the state's performance funding model. In addition, College!Now staff visited Indiana to determine if its performance-based funding model and processes could work for Montana. While the performance-based funding model is expected to have provisions applicable to the Montana’s three locally governed community colleges, initially the model will be limited to the Board of Regent’s (BOR) four-year campuses and affiliated two-year institutions, excluding the community and tribal colleges.
Performance funding metrics will be calculated using student unit records extracted from the Banner institutional operating system used by BOR’s institutions. While Governor Brian Schweitzer's FY 2013 biennial budget recommends funding to install the Banner system at Miles City and Dawson community colleges, these colleges currently use a different student unit record system. Flathead Community College does not participate in the Board of Regents state-based data collections.

The FY 2012 and FY 2013 budget recommendation released by the governor on November 15, 2010 includes new program funding of $2,580,000 in FY 2012 and $3,750,000 in FY 2013 for each of the University of Montana and Montana State University systems and affiliated agencies. These funds are being recommended to enhance student learning, access, success, promote economic development, and more readily respond to workforce development needs by the system presidents. The allocation of these funds to the institutions requires approval by BOR. At the time of this writing, it is not known if these funds will be appropriated by the state’s legislature. If these funds are appropriated, it is unclear how they might be used to fund College!Now initiatives, including the performance funding model planned for implementation in FY 2012. A 5% reduction in the governor's 2012 budget recommendation is being considered by the Republican-dominated state legislature.

Step 2: Rewarding Students for Completing Courses and Degree or Certificate Programs

Montana does not have a program to reward students for completing courses and degrees or certificate programs, and developing a program is not part of the state's productivity work. Interest in developing such a program is now being expressed by the Montana delegation that attended Lumina's National Productivity Conference in Indianapolis, Indiana on November 15 and 16, 2010.

Step 3: Expanding and Strengthening Lower-Cost, Nontraditional Education Options through Modified Regulations

Three components of Montana's productivity work apply to expanding and strengthening lower-cost, nontraditional education options through modified regulations. These components include: (1) bringing the accessibility characteristic of community colleges to all two-year colleges, especially for targeted 21st Century Student populations; (2) deploying Montana's two-year colleges as regional hubs for adult access, high school to college transitions, workforce responsiveness; and, (3) coordinating curriculum and technology to expand access, promote readiness and completion, and improve efficiencies.

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1 We are using the term “21st Century Student” as defined by Lumina Foundation for Education as representing the growing number of low-income, first-generation, minority, and adult students who are increasing in number on U.S. College and University campuses. These students are racially, ethnically, socially and demographically diverse. Increasing their enrollment and degree completion is vital to the success of Montana's productivity work, the future of higher education and ultimately to our nation.
Montana’s productivity work focuses on two-year education as an affordable and effective portal to four-year programs and/or high demand jobs. Increasing statewide access to two-year college programs and services is complex and challenging for Montana; it includes coordinating fifteen associate degree-granting institutions. These include five four-year institutions with two-year missions governed by the Montana Board of Regents, three community colleges with locally elected governing boards, and seven tribal colleges governed by the Tribal Governments.

An active review is underway of existing practices and regulations and the modifications necessary to promote two-year education with students and adults. In collaboration with the state Office of Public Instruction, the Board of Regents is promoting Graduation Matters to Montana, an effort to boost high school graduation rates by raising the legal compulsory age of school attendance from the current sixteen years of age to seventeen or eighteen years and, through the College!Now Transitions Committee, developing a system-wide approach to dual enrollment opportunities.

Initiatives under College!Now include the development of a certificate of completion for the Universal Transfer Core, which aligns basic skills requirements in workforce programs, establishes common instruction requirements for programs leading to the same career, and creates a Montana University System Transferable Core (MUS Core) and a Choices That Count (CTC) Pathway Certificate Program.

During a November 4, 2010 meeting attended by Tribal College leaders, College!Now Implementation Team leaders discussed ideas for two-year college regional hubs. The implementation team leaders describe the hubs as the first point of contact for high school students and businesses in the area assigned to a two-year institution’s regional hub. Another idea presented was to turn the hubs into service centers that reach out to residents and businesses in the region. Areas served by the regional hubs would be identified by the institutions and limited by county lines.

Presidents of the two-year colleges are concerned about the amount of state funding they will receive to support these regional hubs in the coming years and how their institutions should set tuition rates for students who are within their designated hub areas, but who live outside their taxing district. In addition, institutional leaders want to maintain their existing relationships with residents and local businesses. College leaders also believe students should be allowed to enroll in institutions located in other designated regional hubs.

Other issues raised about College!Now initiatives include lack of time to identify the course requirements for lower general education courses, inability of the MUS Core or the CTC Pathway Certificate to satisfy all lower-division general education requirements, and confusion and lack of consistency across campuses about courses that count for lower division general education requirements. In addition, the confusion and cluttered nature of the CTC Pathway Certificate on some community college campuses need to be addressed.

The Montana K-12 Digital Academy (MTDA) electronically delivers dual enrollment and college-level courses statewide. With funding from the state's productivity grant, the College!Now Virtual Community College (VCC) workgroup is developing courses and programs for delivery through two-year collegiate-level institutions for 21st Century Students.

Two of the state's three community colleges are piloting dual enrollment Choices That Count Certificate courses using MTDA. These pilots will identify policy and practical implementation
issues before the programs are scaled to other two-year institutions, for which no timeframe has been established.

At the Forum on Postsecondary Credential Attainment held on August 12, 2010, significant interest arose from Western Governors’ University (WGU) offering online baccalaureate and higher degree courses and programs statewide. The WGU is considered to be a cost-efficient way to meet the education and training needs at the baccalaureate and higher education level for 21st Century Students. Maintaining both the MTDA and VCC will be expensive and could be confusing to students since both offer state-level venues for online courses and dual enrollment. Consequently, College!Now workgroups have suggested that the lower division VCC courses and upper division WGU courses focus on and target the postsecondary education and training needs of adult learners who already have high school diplomas.

Step 4: Investing in Institutions that Demonstrate the Results of Adopting Good Business Practices

The Montana Board of Regents (BOR) has no specific Lumina funded productivity strategy to invest in institutions that adopt good business practices. Examples of work that improve business practices and efficiency throughout the state's higher education system exist, however. For example, schools within K-12 and higher education implemented data systems to improve network connectivity, which support data analysis and resource sharing. BOR, through its College!Now initiatives, is working to establish a higher education policy framework and organizational structure to make the two-year institutions the drivers of best practices in developmental education (including remedial, basic- and life-skills courses) and to bring adult basic literacy education programs and services to all two-year colleges.

As part of BOR’s effort to create greater consistency in the postsecondary system, it approved the transfer of administrative responsibility for the College of Technology in Bozeman from MSU-Great Falls to MSU-Bozeman. It is unclear why the College of Technology was administered by MSU-Great Falls. The program in Bozeman was renamed the Gallatin College Program.

By working to bring the transfer mission to all two-year institutions and branding it positively, the regents are encouraging the Colleges of Technology affiliated with the University of Montana System and community and tribal colleges to develop and implement adult-friendly programming. This includes programming that is convenient to the student and not just the institution, e.g., offering classes during evenings and weekends, or electronically.

Contextual Factors Affecting the Productivity Work in Montana

This section offers evaluative feedback and insights that elucidate what we believe to be contributing to successes and challenges in Montana with respect to its Lumina-funded productivity work.

Factor 1: Continuity despite personnel changes

On January 1, 2011, Dr. John Cech, the former dean of the MSU-Billings College of Technology, replaced Dr. Mary Sheehy Moe, who served the regents as their deputy commissioner for Two-year Education and Montana's College!Now. Dr. Cech is Deputy Commissioner for Two-year and Community College Education. Dr. Cech's restructured position helps move the state’s productivity agenda in several ways. First, by adding responsibility for coordinating the community colleges to Dr. Cech's new position, the Board of Regents (BOR) will improve its ability to meet its goals for the state's two-year institution productivity. Second, this allows Dr.
Cech to speak for the interests and role of all two-year institutions with the BOR. Third, this gives him more authority over local community colleges. Finally, this change will likely support the continuity of grant-funded productivity work.

Montana's productivity-related communications was performed under a contract with CommWorks directed by Travis Reindl, who left CommWorks for a position with the National Governors' Association. After releasing a request for proposals to secure another communications contractor in fall 2010, BOR cancelled the request on December 2, 2010 to give Dr. Cech an opportunity to develop a new request. Dr. Cech will develop a new request for proposals to ensure that College!Now’s needs are met for external communications.

Support from the governor, state-level partners including the superintendent of Instruction, workforce and economic development leaders, and resolutions by BOR reflect the state's solid commitment to continuity and sustainability of the state's two-year college initiative despite any future changes in leadership in state government or the project.

Factor 2: Evaluative thinking and integration of metrics

Montana’s goal is to increase the state’s educational attainment level from thirty-five percent in 2008 to fifty-five percent by 2025. This will require an increase of 24,500 degree recipients. It would require an additional 112,354 degrees, averaging an annual increase of 826 additional degrees to reach Lumina’s educational attainment goal of sixty percent by 2025.

Montana has complied with calculation and reporting requirements for Lumina's eight core metrics, but has not made significant use of them to monitor the state's progress toward meeting its productivity goals. Instead, the Board of Regents (BOR) adopted the Access to Success Performance Measures (ASPM) currently used by twenty-six state university systems across the country. ASPM will help monitor Montana State University System’s progress toward the state's productivity goals.

Eleven College!Now workgroups are responsible for studying and making recommendations about productivity related performance measures and metric definitions for their productivity-related area. Individual workgroups will prepare policy and related metric recommendations for BOR to improve the delivery of postsecondary education in the following areas:

- Adult Basic Education and Literacy
- Adult-Friendly Program Delivery
- Curriculum Coordination and Alignment
- Communications and Engagement
- Coordinate and Align Technology
- Developmental Education
- High School Transitions
- Performance Funding
- Transfer Programming
- Virtual Community College
- Workforce Responsiveness
Both Access to Success Performance Measures and other measures and metrics being recommended by the College!Now workgroups will be used to monitor and evaluate the success of College!Now and progress toward the state's productivity goals. It is important to note that it will take Montana time and various iterations of its performance measures and metrics before anyone knows if the new College!Now policy interventions make a difference in the number of degree completions. It may be several years before any College!Now strategies achieve their desired outcome.

Anne Clark of Collaborative Research Associates (CRA) directs the Lumina productivity evaluation for Montana. This evaluation includes the formative question: Which program and policy models were implemented by the College!Now strategy? The evaluation also addresses the summative question: How has the College!Now effort influenced higher education productivity in Montana? These questions are consistent with time and resources, and serve to evaluate the College!Now initiative in its several stages. These questions are also consistent with the national evaluation’s focus on identifying what works for whom in the implementation states’ efforts to use policy change as a means for improving higher education productivity.

The design and pre-implementation stages of the CRA evaluation focus on understanding the processes and mechanisms of the work and how it will be measured. The implementation stage compares the original model with the actual model used and addresses barriers to implementation. The last stage, replication of mature model, identifies the long-term outcomes related to the core productivity measures and which groups benefited the most from the model. The overarching goal is to continue to track and report intentional policy and systems change in the following areas of the Lumina work: eight Core Metrics, communications and engagement, adult basic literacy education, developmental education, transfer programming, high school to college transitions, workforce responsiveness, adult-friendly programming, regional hubs, curriculum coordination, integration of technology, virtual community college, and performance based funding. CRA uses a propriety policy tracking tool to report interim results and lessons learned. As such, we cannot comment on the value of this tool to the instate evaluations in other implementation states, or to the national evaluation of Lumina’s productivity work. Data from this tool indicate that Montana’s project is generally on track with its proposed objectives and timeline.

In addition to tracking College!Now actions, the year-one evaluation included analysis of feedback from 250 stakeholders who attended seventeen community listening tours across the state, analysis of feedback data from a learning year survey of state economic development stakeholders, and analysis of feedback data from attendees at a forum on adult education and certification. Results of these analyses are being used by College!Now leadership to guide planning for next step activities of the related College!Now workgroups. Results will also be incorporated into CRA’s year-one evaluation report to be delivered to College!Now by March 1, 2011.

The year-one CRA evaluation report will synthesize findings from stakeholder feedback and policy tracking results, producing an overall analysis of year-one College!Now progress as well as the progress of each College!Now strategy/committee within the context of recent College!Now and higher education institution leadership changes. The year-one report will also incorporate analysis of barriers and challenges that arose and how College!Now addressed them.
Next phases of the College!Now evaluation will focus on further progress with strategy implementation and analysis of how each strategy is contributing to progress toward Montana’s and Lumina’s higher education productivity goals, as measured by the eight core metrics and/or other relevant metrics that may be adopted by the College!Now initiative.  

**Factor 3: Integration with related, non-grant initiatives**

Staff from the Governor's office, Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education, Office of Economic Opportunity, and Department of Labor jointly developed and submitted a funding proposal to the National Governors' Association for a Forum on Postsecondary Credential Attainment. The National Governor's Association awarded the funds and the Forum on Postsecondary Credential Attainment was held on August 12, 2010, at which 140 business and education leaders attended. Of particular interest during this one-time forum funded by the NGA grant were the two sessions on the Western Governors' University, which is being considered a possible site to deliver statewide electronic access to baccalaureate and higher degree level courses and programs.

Montana is not a Complete College America alliance state, nor is it a Race to the Top winner.

**Factor 4: Political influences**

Montana higher education has not been immune to political influences. For example, delegates to the Constitutional Convention in 1971 established the Board of Regents as a constitutional body with governing powers over the university system to prevent what had been a tendency for legislators to intervene in the day to day life of the university system. This new constitutional provision limits the legislature's ability to determine how and where monies appropriated for education were to be spent.

Local and regional political influence on statewide postsecondary initiatives is influenced by the isolated rural population in Montana as well as those within community and tribal college governance. Because local business leaders are politically influential at the local, regional, and state level, College!Now workgroups surveyed members of the state's Economic Development Association and Montana Ambassadors in 2010 to assess how well higher education was meeting their needs. When responses are analyzed and reported, they will help to guide the improvement of the two-year institutions’ participation in economic and workforce development.

Preliminary survey results reveal that business leaders feel that the isolated and rural nature of the state and the distances between postsecondary institutions and programs sometimes warrant program duplication. The preliminary results also revealed that neither the University of Montana nor the affiliated two-year colleges of technology participate in economic development activities, and that two-year colleges “think too much like four-year colleges,” i.e., focused more on institutional aspirations and academic programs rather than on the postsecondary education and training needs of local residents and businesses. In addition, business leaders perceive that the university system does not care about students, that is, it cares more about money; that the general education core requirements are patterned after Ivy League college requirements, and these requirements are not relevant to student needs in Montana.
During the Legislature’s January 17, 2011 hearing by the Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Education, students, community college presidents, and business leaders urged lawmakers to fully fund the state's share of the budget recommendations for the community colleges and other two-year schools. In their testimony before the Subcommittee, students praised Montana’s two-year colleges for their quality programs and services. Students also described how their two-year education had affected and changed their lives. For example, an eastern Montana man turned his associate’s degree from Miles Community College into a bachelor’s degree and founded a Washington, D.C., communications and lobbying business. He still runs his ranch in Rosebud County.\textsuperscript{51}

Feedback from business leaders and student comments at the January Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Education illustrates the need for Montana's productivity agenda to stay focused on the vital mission and role of the two-year institution. These findings are useful to those charged with statewide planning for higher education and shaping Montana's two-year college initiative to better suit the needs of business leaders. According to Dr. John Cech, Deputy Commissioner of Higher Education for two-year and community college education, “Montana's two-year colleges play an incredibly important role in our state....Eighty percent of all jobs require some level of post-secondary education.”\textsuperscript{52}

The existing governance and structure of Montana’s higher education is complex, however, and varies in governance type. It lacks a coordinated approach to statewide postsecondary education and training issues. Coordination with the ten autonomous community and tribal colleges will require agreements with these institutions and their willingness to participate is one measure of success of College!Now.

**Factor 5: Public involvement and support**

Appointed and elected local, regional, and statewide officials and business leaders sit on various College!Now committees, study two-year college issues, and make recommendations to the Montana Board of Regents on ways to best implement the four components of the state's productivity grant.\textsuperscript{53} The committees and workgroups meet regularly, often weekly by conference call.\textsuperscript{54} When additional expertise is needed on a committee, membership has opened and new members have been recruited.\textsuperscript{55}

In 2010, several print media articles described College!Now initiatives and commented on the importance of the project for the state.\textsuperscript{56, 57, 58, 59} Dr. Sheila Stearns, Commissioner of Higher Education, went on listening tours in eighteen communities across the state in fall 2010 to describe College!Now initiatives and garner public involvement and support for the state's productivity work. Commissioner Stearns listened to residents share their thoughts about the strategies to expand and improve the programs and services the state's two-year college will offer when the project is fully implemented. Surveys and notes were taken during these listening tours; however, an analysis of those findings is currently not available.\textsuperscript{60}

\textit{The views expressed in this publication are those of the author, and do not necessarily represent those of Lumina Foundation for Education, its officers or employees.}
Montana University System: Roadmap for “COLLEGE! NOW”
Two-Year College Initiative to Increase Degree and Certificate Completions
(3-25-2010)

### Strategies/Activities

#### #1: Bring adult basic literacy education (ABLE), develop ed., and transfer programs to each 2-yr college:
- (a) Bring ABLE, develop ed, transfer programs to all 2-yr campuses
- (b) Develop adult-friendly delivery models for CC mission

#### #2: Develop each 2-yr college as regional hub for adult access, high school to college transition, and workforce responsiveness:
- (a) Implement best practices in workforce development
- (b) Create statewide protocols for high school/college pathways and dual enrollment

#### #3: Coordinate curriculum and technology to expand access, promote readiness/completion, and improve efficiencies:
- (a) Integrate IT/data mgmt systems
- (b) Align common related instruction requirements in workforce programs
- (c) Create a streamlined “regents transfer core”
- (d) Create virtual community college

#### #4: Develop / implement performance-based funding model that promotes student success and degree completion:
- (a) Institute funding strategies to promote student success and degree completion

#### #5: Promote 2-yr education as affordable, effective portal to 4-yr programs and / or high-demand jobs:
- (a) Implement communication, marketing, and engagement plan

### OUTCOMES

- Increased engagement of HS students in 2-yr education
- Reduced remediation needed for traditional students
- Improved utilization of 2-yr education
- Economies and efficiencies of scale
- Ability to balance capacity statewide, shared resources, and structural alliances
- MT has qualified workers
- Lower cost/completion
- More 2-yr degree completions
- A highly skilled workforce makes MT more economically competitive

### STRENGTHS

1. Growing but still variable public awareness of capacity of 2-yr colleges
2. BOR, Governor, and legislature support for Lumina work; alignment of recent policy and legislative actions
3. Willing involvement of MT stakeholders

### CHALLENGE/OPTPORTUNITY

1. Underutilization of 2-yr education relative to other states
2. Confusing mix of 2-yr programs and nomenclature across the state
3. Variable knowledge/awareness among legislators
4. Separate missions and governance of various 2-yr colleges

### Context

- Access to full community college mission at all 2-yr colleges
- Clear, consistent communications to schools, parents, and the public about college readiness
- Improved access for high school students to a range of HE opportunities including dual enrollment, AP, and Early College
- Increased engagement of adult students in 2-yr education
- All 2-yr colleges become regional hubs for HE and are readily responsive to business and workforce needs
- Access to range of HE opportunities through statewide Virtual Community College portal
- Increased completion of certificate and workforce programs
- Increased completion of “core” and transfers to 4-yr colleges
- Improved 2-yr education data, seamless business practices, and pathway for transfer
- Clear, consistent communications about the range of 2-yr education opportunities, what each is named, where it is available, and how it prepares students for the workforce

### Performance Metrics

- 16,056 enrollment
- 648 transfers from 2-yr to 4-yr
- 3,089 degrees and certificates
- $30,543 expenditure per completion

### Readily understood positive brand / identity for 2-yr colleges and the 2-yr sector

### Greater utilization of 2-year education

### Industry tuition assistance


11 Ibid.


SPEC Associates for Lumina Foundation
Montana State Team Base Learning Year Report


27 Ibid.

28 Ibid.

29 Ibid.


42 Lumina Foundation for Education. (2010, November). *Navigating the new normal.*


Clark, A. (Personal communication, 2011, January 24). E-mail description of Montana instate evaluation plans.


SPEC Associates. (2010, November 3). November Touch Base Call for Montana (Transcript of phone call with SPEC Associates).