

From: Deputy Commissioner John Cech  
To: Board of Regents

Please see below for an executive overview of the Level II items that are being proposed for your review and action at the January 2018 meeting of the Board of Regents. These items have been submitted by the campuses and reviewed by the Chief Academic Officers of the Montana University System and community colleges. OCHE staff has reviewed the items and provided a short analysis below relying on information submitted by the campuses. For more information and specific details on each item, please see the supporting documentation included on the Academic, Research, and Student Affairs Committee agenda.

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### **Flathead Valley Community College**

#### **A.A.S. in Firearms Technologies**

Flathead Valley Community College requests authorization to establish an associate of applied science in Firearms Technologies. Currently, FVCC offers two CTS programs in Firearms: Firearms Technology, which builds a foundation in theory, design, and function of firearms; and Firearms Finishing, which is oriented toward metal finishing and work with gunstocks. The proposed AAS degree is the combination of these two CTS programs into a stackable program that will prepare students for entry-level positions in the firearms industry or provide a building block toward owning a business as a gunsmith. Students in the existing program requested an AAS option to improve their employability as there are many firearms manufacturers in the Flathead Valley. The Flathead Job Service regularly announces positions for gunsmiths and machinists but is unable to fill these positions from the local area.

There are no similar programs in the MUS and no additional resources are needed to accommodate this new program.

*OCHE Staff Recommendation: Approve*

### **Montana State University**

#### **Regional Initiative for Dental Education (RIDE) Program**

Montana State University, in collaboration with the University of Washington School of Dentistry, requests authorization to establish the Regional Initiative for Dental Education (RIDE) program. The proposed regional dental education program will utilize WWAMI's existing infrastructure and large portions of WWAMI's first year curriculum at MSU. Students will spend the second year at Spokane RIDE sites, the third year at the UWSOD main Seattle campus, and will return to Montana the fourth year for already-established dental clinical rotations in rural communities and Native American tribal centers.

RIDE dental students will share space leased by MSU at Bozeman Deaconess Hospital for the WWAMI program and can utilize MSU shared services including accounting, HR, and IT. The RIDE program will need a dental simulation lab and equipment and one distance learning classroom as well as a full-time operations manager and part-time positions including a dental program director, dental faculty, dental lab technician and a shared distance learning IT specialist with WWAMI.

In 2016, 47 out of the 56 Montana counties were classified as a Dental Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) and most Montana dentists practiced dentistry in just 9 out of 56 counties. There is no dental education program in the MUS. Montana RIDE dental students will participate in dental hygiene seminars, educational programs and clinical training through collaboration with the MSU-Great Falls Dental Hygiene Program. Legislative funding will be sought during the 2019 session.

*OCHÉ Staff Recommendation: Approve*