MSU Teacher Preparation Initiatives for Rural Schools

Presentation for MUS BOR and EDIC Joint Meeting

November 19, 2021
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College of EHHD
96% of Montana’s school districts are rural
Strong and viable rural schools are key to energizing & sustaining Montana’s rural communities.
Master of Arts in Teaching
Launched summer 2019
One-week practicum at MSU: Inclusive Community Camp
Using technology to connect teachers, learners, and mentors
MAT Teacher Residents: 2020 Locations
MAT COMPLETERS:

SPRING 2020
Secondary: 8

SPRING 2021
Elementary: 11
Secondary: 9

SPRING 2022
Elementary: 11
Secondary: 10
The Center for Research on Rural Education

www.montana.edu/crre/

Director: Jayne Downey, PhD
Developing highly capable teachers for rural schools

- Student Recruitment
- Early Field Experience
- Teaching Practicum
- Student Teaching
- Mentoring new teachers
Community Ready

Classroom Ready

School Ready
$3.1M US Dept of Education Grant; Matched 100%

Montana Rural Teacher Project (MRTP)
MT RURAL TEACHER PROJECT PARTNERS:

Office of Public Instruction (OPI) and the Teacher Learning Hub
Western Montana Professional Learning Collaborative (WMPLC)
School Services of Montana (SSM)
Montana Small Schools Alliance (MSSA)
Montana Rural Education Association (MREA)
School Administrators or Montana (SAM)
Montana School Boards Association (MTSBA)
Montana Federation of Public Employees (MFPE)
MT Association of School Business Officials (MASBO)
Big Sky Youth Empowerment Project (BYEP)
OCHE Teacher Recruitment and Retention Task Force
Program Features

- Rural Placements
- Living wage stipends
- 3 year teaching commitment after completion
- New teacher mentoring
- Remote professional learning opportunities
- Professional development for school leaders
Teacher placements:

- Cohort 1 (2020-21)
  - 18 enrolled; 16 graduated; 14 employed
- Cohort 2 (2021-22)
  - 20 enrolled; 15 active in program
Mentoring new rural teachers:
• >100 teachers volunteered to be mentors
• 20 mentors trained
• 14 matched to new teacher grade and content
Rural Mental Health Preparation/Practice Pathway (RMHP3)

to address a severe mental health workforce shortage in MT schools
Project Partners:

- MT Office of Public Instruction
- Montana Rural Education Association (MREA)
- Montana Small Schools Alliance (MSSA)
- Montana School Counselor Association (MSCA)

MSU/UM Collaboration

$2.3 Grant from US Dept of Ed
RMHP3 MODEL

Accessibility . Availability . Acceptability

Stages in developing counselor efficacy and longevity in rural communities

Step 1: Rural Life Orientation
Step 2: Rural Professional Practicum
Step 3: Rural Internship
Step 4: Rural Professional Practice

Sustainability

References:
Mohatt [n.d.] WiCHE, Rural Health: Challenges and Opportunities Caring for the Country.
RMHP3 COMPLETERS:

Cohort 1 (Spring 2021)
10 enrolled
9 completed
9 employed in rural places

Cohort 2
10 enrolled

Cohort 3
Recruiting
Advancing Support, Preparation, and Innovation in Rural Education (ASPIRE)

$1.5M Grant from Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies
ASPIRE Project Initiatives:

Rural Teacher Pathways
MentorMT
Montana Teacher Licensure Clearinghouse
Proficiency-Based Education
Features of Proficiency-Based Education

- Rigorous learning outcomes
- Students make decisions
- Meaningful assessment and feedback
- Relevant, timely, and differentiated instruction
- Progress is evidence based
- Active learning
- Variable pathways, modalities and pace
- Equity for all students
“It is the goal of the people to establish a system of education which will develop the full educational potential of each person. Equality of educational opportunity is guaranteed to each person of the state.”

Constitution of Montana
Article X, Section 1
Project Initiatives

- Summer institute for teachers
- Teacher education module development
- Family engagement program
- Enhancement of field experiences
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