



**Request for Promising Proposals**  
for  
**Montana Grow Your Own Educator Programs**

To address educator recruitment and retention issues in rural Montana and Indian Country, the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education seeks applications to the Montana Grow Your Own Educator Program. This program will fund post-secondary and K-12 partnerships to implement strategies that develop the pipeline of K-12 students entering the teaching profession with the intent to serve communities with acute educator shortages.

Estimated Total Program Funding: \$450,000

Estimated Maximum Award: \$112,500 (over the biennium)

Estimated Number of Awards: 4

Period of Performance: August 30, 2021 – June 30, 2023

Match Requirement: Provide dollar for dollar match (match may be in kind and is subject to approval and agreement upon award)

Montana public post-secondary institutions, in collaboration with one or more qualified school districts, should submit applications to [amclean@montana.edu](mailto:amclean@montana.edu) by 5PM on Wednesday, July 7. Priority will be given to establishing partnerships with a diverse set of post-secondary institutions. Please note that:

- A qualifying K-12 school district is one which is impacted by a quality critical educator shortage as per the Montana Office of Public Instruction 2020-21 Quality Critical Educator Shortage List  
<http://opi.mt.gov/Portals/182/Page%20Files/Educator%20Recruitment%20and%20Retention/Critical%20Educator%20Shortage%20Report%2020-21%20school%20year.pdf>
- For full consideration, two-year, community college and tribal institutions of higher education without educator preparatory programs should demonstrate coordination and collaboration with a Montana-based accredited educator prep program

Successful applications will:

- Outline a compelling collaboration that will enable juniors and seniors in high school to engage in Work Based Learning and make significant steps in their studies to become a teacher through dual enrollment and other promising practices
- Outline a collaboration that will enable students to start and complete an educator prep program where they live
- Demonstrate the ability to sustain the program beyond the start-up, submitting a sustainability plan as a component of the application
- Demonstrate the collaboration's ability to begin implementation in Fall 2021, with scale and full implementation (e.g. students taking courses that contribute to a postsecondary teaching credential) no later than Spring 2022

Successful applications must incorporate the following program components:

- Support development of dual enrollment at the K-12 level allowing the Grow Your Own cohort to begin coursework their junior year in high school
  - The cohort is defined as a student entering their junior year of high school Fall 2021
- Provide the opportunity to take dual enrollment coursework as part of their path toward program completion. This dual enrollment coursework must be available to students at no cost and may include General Education courses as well as Introduction to Education coursework
- Provide an opportunity for students to engage in Work Based Learning in education
- Consist of collaboration between one or more qualified K-12 school districts and post-secondary institutions
- Include dedicated professionals to guide and support students toward completion of an educator prep program
- Provide a pathway for students to complete an educator prep program where they live
- Provide dollar for dollar match (match may be in kind and is subject to approval and agreement upon award)

Applications are encouraged to incorporate the following program components:

- Include an effort to establish an Educators Rising chapter at the impacted schools
- Establish a local grow your own task force/committee with key stakeholders

Award recipients must agree to:

- Submit an annual report including (but not limited to): number of students served, number of completed courses, expenditures overall and expenditures per student, number of courses established and delivered and to how many students, how many dual enrollment credits were delivered
- Participate in monthly meetings (online or in person) with the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education
- Be prepared to present performance metrics to the Montana Legislature
- Survey program participants at the local level and return results to the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education
  - Survey will be created in partnership with the OCHE staff

Please use the included application form. A complete application should include no more than 10 pages including budget, narrative, sustainability plan and match explanation. Letters of support from partnering K-12 districts or institutions of higher education do not count toward the 10 pages.