

MSU Teacher Preparation Initiatives for Rural Schools



**Presentation for MUS BOR
and EDIC Joint Meeting**

**November 19, 2021
Alison Harmon, Dean
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





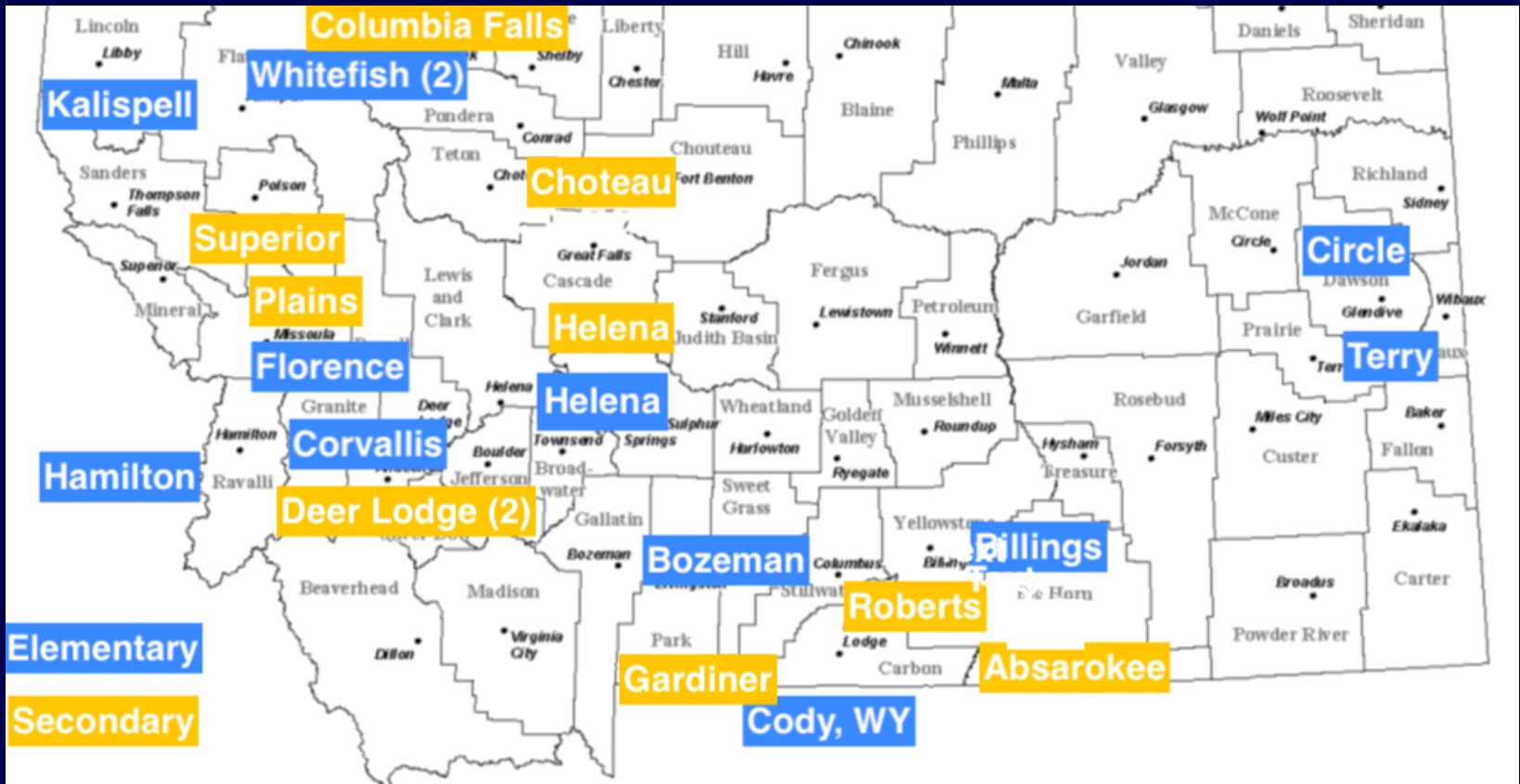
**Master of Arts in Teaching
Launched summer 2019**



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



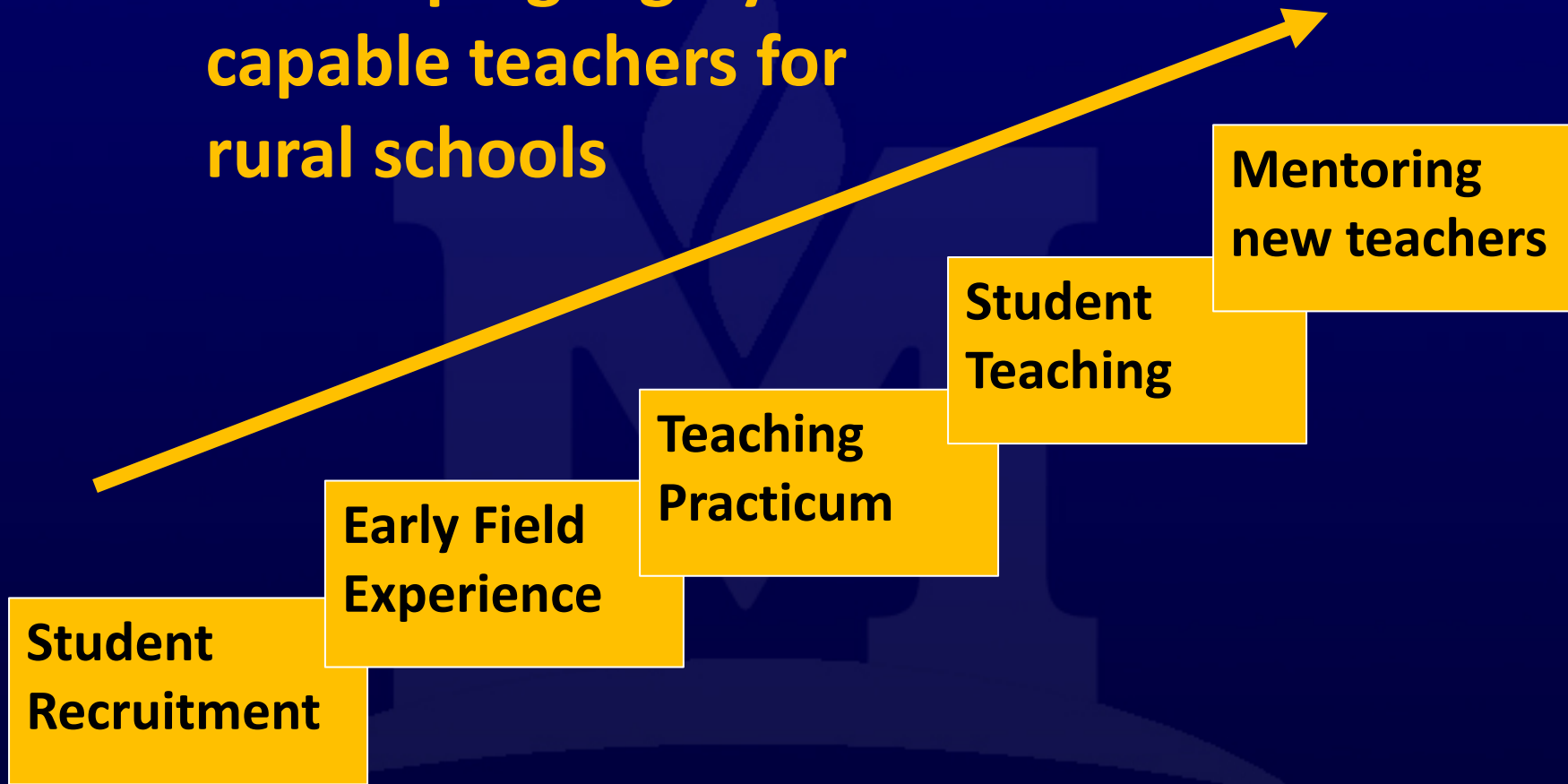


The Center for Research on Rural Education

www.montana.edu/crre/

Director: Jayne Downey, PhD

Developing highly capable teachers for rural schools







**\$3.1M US Dept of
Education Grant;
Matched %100**

Montana Rural Teacher Project (MRTTP)

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 of 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)

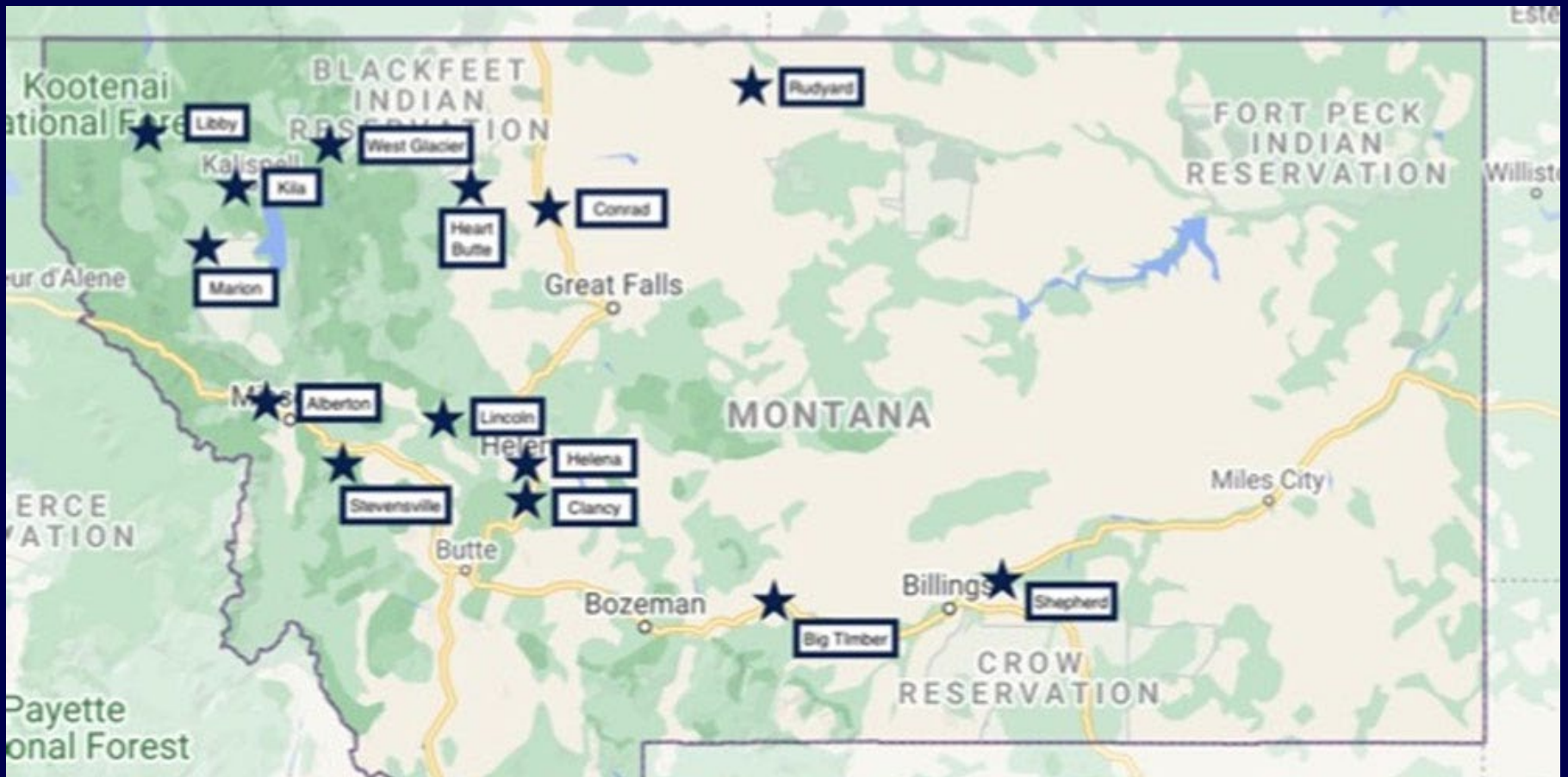
OCHE Teacher Recruitment and Retention Task Force



Program Features

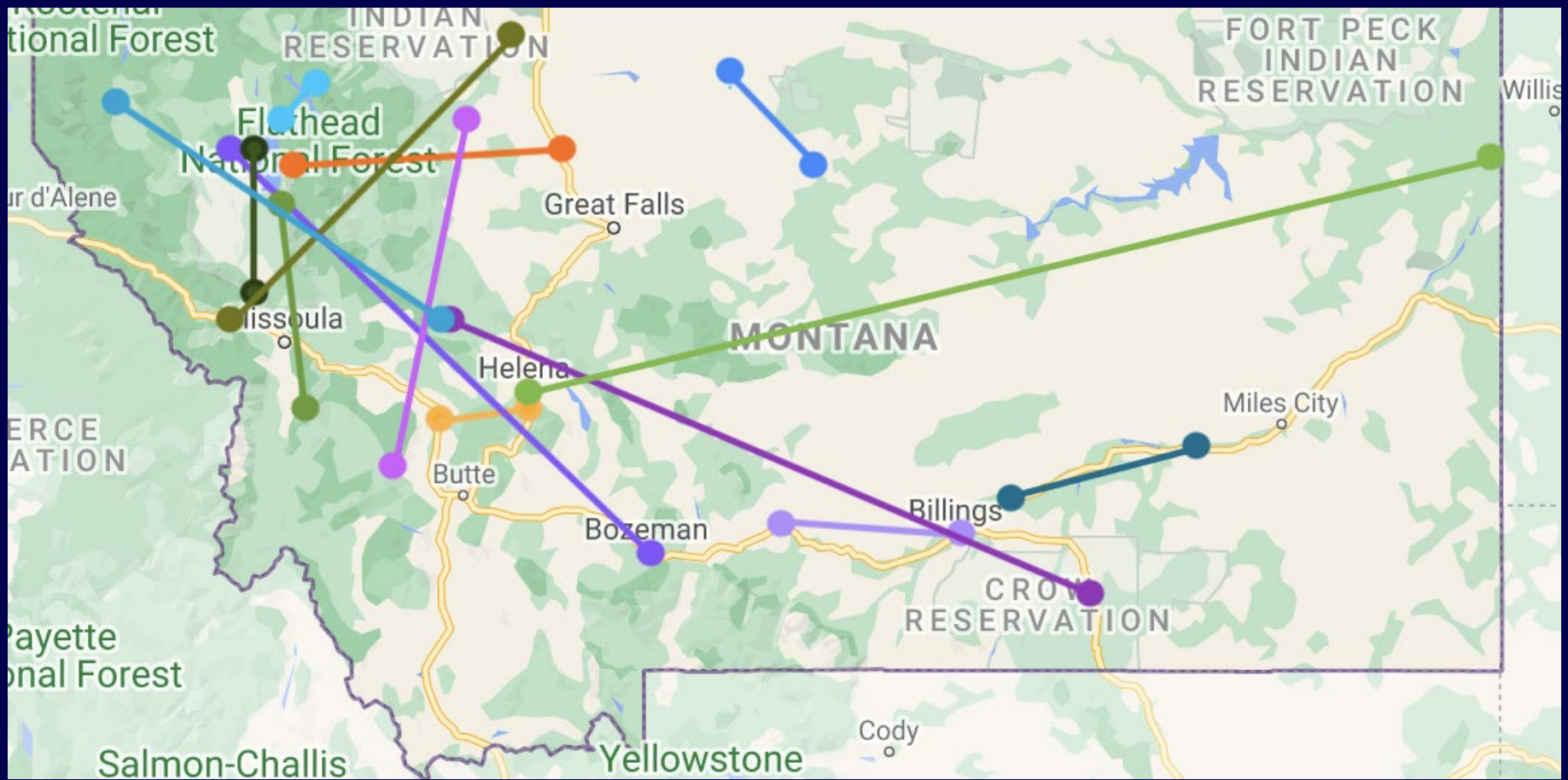
- Rural Placements
- Living wage stipends
- 3 year teaching commitment after completion
- New teacher mentoring
- Remote professional learning opportunities
- Professional development for school leaders





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:

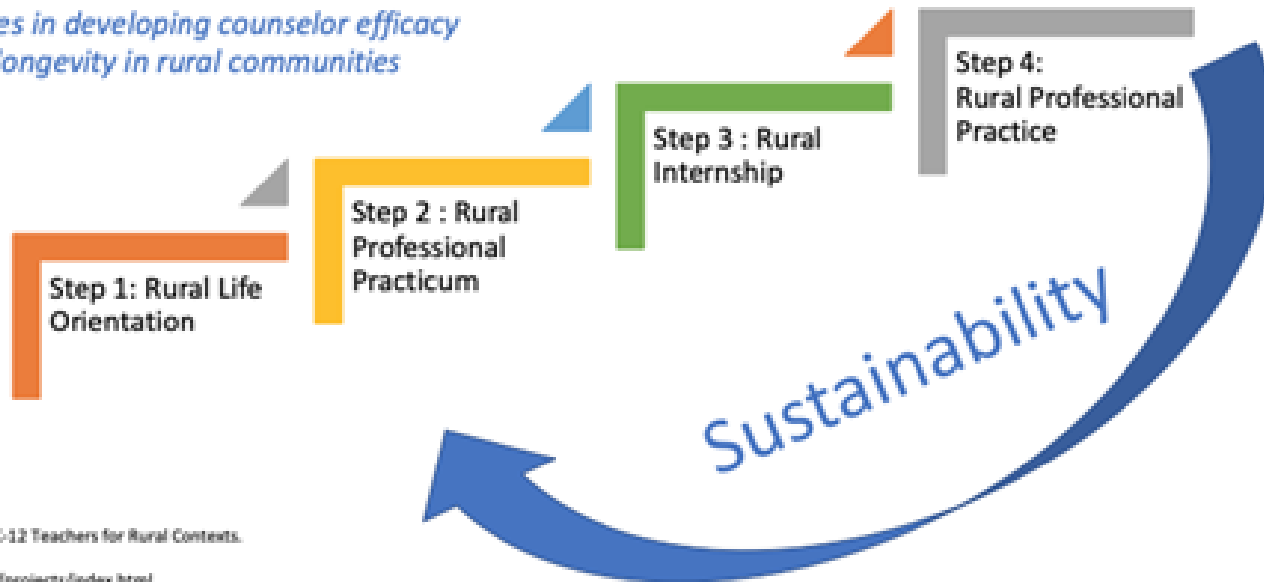
- **MT Office of Public Instruction**
- **Montana Rural Education Association (MREA)**
- **Montana Small Schools Alliance (MSSA)**
- **Montana School Counselor Association (MSCA)**

MSU/UM Collaboration

**\$2.3 Grant from US Dept
of Ed**

Accessibility . Availability . Acceptability

*Stages in developing counselor efficacy
and longevity in rural communities*



References:

Downey, J. (2017). Preparing PK-12 Teachers for Rural Contexts. Retrieved from <http://www.montana.edu/cme/projects/index.html>.
Mohatt [n.d.] WICHL, Rural Health: Challenges and Opportunities: Caring for the Country.

RMHP3 MODEL

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

Many thanks to:

Jayne Downey

Tricia Seifert

Ann Ewbank

Tena Versland

Jennifer Luebeck

Anna Elliott

Rebecca Koltz

Kirsten Murray (UM)

Kris Olsen

