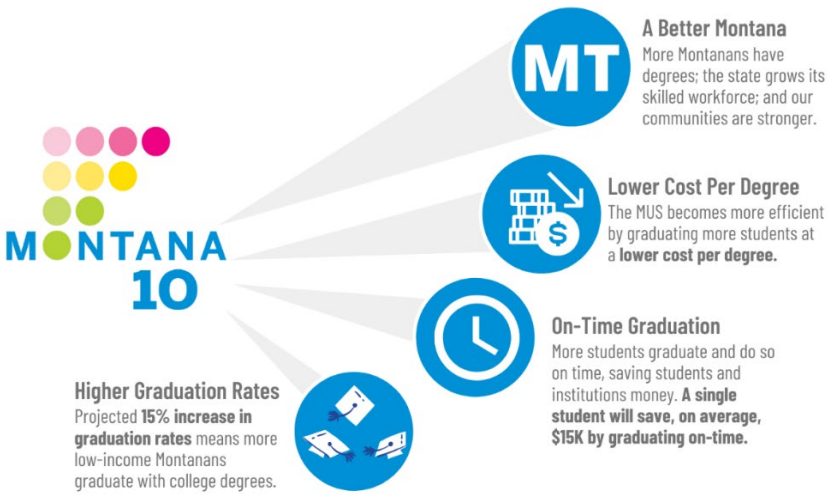
Montana 10

Updated May 2024



Description

This request would pair state support with a campus and philanthropic match to **expand proven evidence-based services to more Montana resident students** entering college and move Montana 10 from pilot status to a permanent program.

Highlights

DRIVES DEGREE COMPLETION Montana 10 increases graduation rates by leveraging innovative approaches to student support, system-level policy, and a model that pairs incentives with student expectations to drive student participation in high-impact, evidence-based academic supports, advising, and career development activities.

ENHANCES EFFICIENCY FOR STUDENTS AND THE STATE Montana 10 shortens time to degree. By doing so, the program increases efficiency of state investment by reducing stranded investment in students who do not graduate and, ultimately, lowering the state's overall cost per degree.

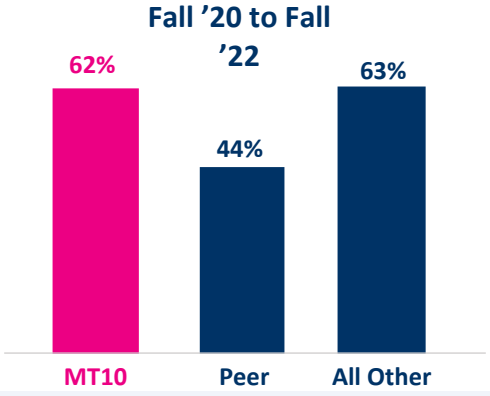
LAUNCHES MONTANANS TO REALIZE THEIR CAREER POTENTIAL In the next 10 years, 69% of jobs in Montana will require a postsecondary credential. Unfortunately, too many Montanans are underemployed, in part because the barriers to accessing or completing a degree or credential are too high. While Montana is a net importer of out-of-state college grads, good Montana jobs should go to Montanans. **Montana 10 helps resident students graduate with the skills and knowledge they need to secure good jobs and meet the workforce demands of the state.**

Proven Outcomes

MORE MONTANANS EARNING 2-YEAR AND 4-YEAR DEGREES In its 4th year of a pilot program that serves over 700 Montana students at eight public two-year and four-year colleges and universities, the program has consistently produced a **16% increase in retention for four-year students** and **has doubled on-time degree completion for two-year students** compared to peers not in the program.

"MT10 is helping me prepare for the workplace by allowing me to network and form better and stronger interpersonal communication styles."
Montana 10 Scholar

MAKING BETTER PROGRESS TO ON-TIME COMPLETION On average, Montana 10 students earn 6 more credits in their first year than peers not in the program. This puts Montana 10 students on track to graduate at higher rates and do so faster, **reducing the cost to degree for students and the state.**



TRANSFORMING INSTITUTIONS LEADS TO STUDENT SUCCESS From removing administrative barriers to data-driven advising to creating strong expectations for students in supportive environments, Montana 10 is transforming how the MUS does college. And it works. Montana 10 students graduate at higher rates because they are more than **2x as likely** as their peers to talk to their advisor about career planning, **4x as likely** to get help accessing campus services like financial aid and tutoring, and **7x as likely** to talk to an advisor about mental health.

*"Montana 10 [has] been the main source of me being able to get through this college career…They've made it a way for me to pay my bills, they've made ways for me to be connected to scholarships…**They didn't necessarily hold my hand, but they gave me the information I needed and made it very simple to utilize whatever source I needed in order to finish the program,** and for that I'm very grateful."*
Montana 10 Scholar

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Dual Enrollment

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Highlights

- Dual Enrollment provides opportunities for high school students to take college courses while still in high school, providing an early introduction to college.
- Dual Enrollment increases **resident student access**, including at rural (Class B and C) schools, by exposing students who may not consider postsecondary education to college-level work.
- Dual Enrollment increases exposure to high quality postsecondary opportunities, including Career and Technical Education.
- One-Two-Free is an MUS program that offers two dual enrollment courses, up to six credits worth $2,000 or more at a two-year school, to eligible students for free.

$2,000+

saved in tuition at a two-year school for six dual enrollment credits

ONE TWO FREE. ONE SYSTEM. TWO COURSES. FREE ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION.

Impacts

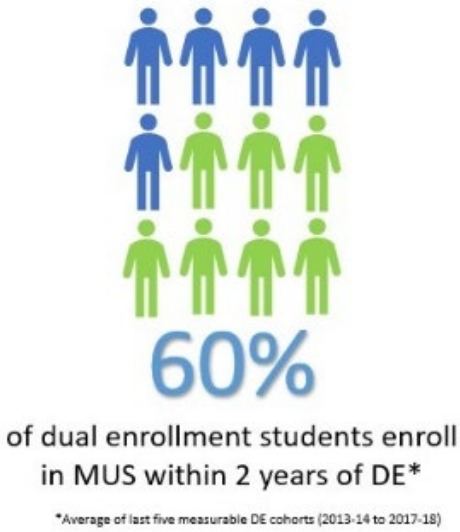
- Since its launch as an MUS pilot in August 2018, One-Two-Free has doubled uptake of dual enrollment, **reducing education costs** for families.
- Today, 1 in 3 Montana high school graduates will have college credit at graduation, with an increasing share of those credits earned in Career and Technical Education fields.
- One-Two-Free also allows students who demonstrate hardship to apply for a scholarship to cover tuition for additional Dual Enrollment courses.
- 60% of Dual Enrollment students enroll in the MUS within 2 years of high school graduation.

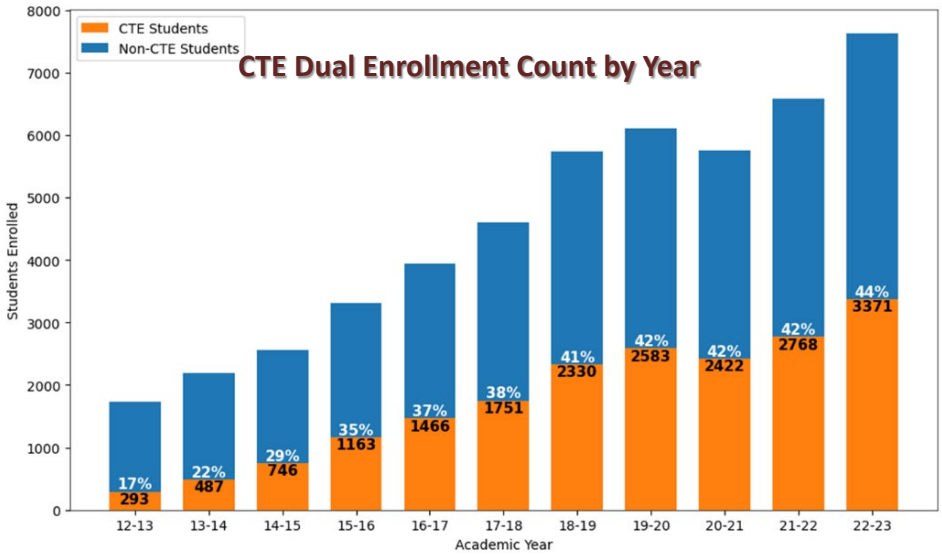
32%

of eligible enrolled high school students received college credit in the 2021-2022 school year

Funding

- One-Two Free has been supported through a federal Gear-Up grant; however, due to changes in federal requirements, less Gear-Up money will be available. Absent a new funding source, One-Two-Free will lapse beginning in fall 2025.
- The biennial base request and the smaller fraction of Gear-Up funds would sustain One-Two-Free, and the OTO would qualify rural educators to teach Dual Enrollment courses by subsidizing necessary graduate-level credit.





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Graduate Health & Professional Pathways Initiative

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Launch Physician Assistant and Occupational Therapy Programs

- Montana has no public training option for Physician Assistants (PAs) or for Doctors of Occupational Therapy (OTDs). **Workforce projections have demonstrated a persistent shortage of trained PA and OTD professionals.**
- According to a 2022 Montana Department of Labor and Industry Report, Montana is in critical need of more Physician Assistants and Occupational Therapists. The report estimates that up to 67 Physician Assistants are needed each year to fill the state's current shortages, and there are less than half that number of graduates (36) each year.
- The same report estimates the state needs about 33 Occupational Therapists added to Montana's workforce annually to meet demand.

- Public options for these degree programs **reduce tuition costs for resident students** and those students are more likely to remain and practice in the state, **meeting workforce demands**.
- The University of Montana is working to launch these programs but requires support to cover start-up costs related to programmatic accreditation, instructional space, and clinical training equipment. The PA program would first enroll students in Fall 2026 and, at capacity, graduate ~24 students annually. The OTD program would first enroll students in Fall 2025 and, at capacity, graduate ~30 students annually. Both programs are forecast to be self-sustaining through student tuition after their 3rd year of operation.

- Both programs will include supervised clinical experiences for graduate students who will be placed in on-campus or community settings where their services will consistently enhance clinical services capacity.

Regional Initiatives in Dental Education (RIDE) and Rural Dental Workforce Need

- RIDE is a cost-effective, scalable Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS) degree program in Washington that aims to increase the number of dentists who practice in rural and underserved communities, similar to the WWAMI program for medical training.
- 79% of Montana's counties are designated as dental health professional shortage areas.
- In a 2022 report, the Montana Department of Labor and Industry identified 10 counties without any residing licensed dentist. Rural dentistry is a glaring **workforce need**.
- **Return on investment:** A large majority of all RIDE graduating dentists practice in their funding state; in Washington, 70% of all RIDE graduates currently practice in rural and underserved communities.
- Using existing WWAMI infrastructure at MSU-Bozeman, this effort would create a Montana RIDE training path, with cohorts of 8 Montana DDS students training in Montana for their first year, completing clinical rotations in Montana, and finishing years 2 and 3 of training in Washington state.

Distance Learning Law Program

- The Alexander Blewett III School of Law is Montana's only law school. For 113 years, the ABIII School of Law has been the state's primary **workforce development pathway** for the lawyers, prosecutors, and judges that serve all of Montana – including municipalities, 56 district courts, and tribal governments.
- The ABIII School of Law's curriculum is unique to Montana, with emphasis on land-use, water policy, agriculture, and tribal legal issues. But due to the distance between Missoula and many Montana communities, a growing number of students are seeking distance learning options.
- This proposal would provide one-time-only financial support to build a distance learning option for students seeking a Montana-based legal education. These funds would provide a financial bridge for the ABIII School of Law to onboard enough students to sustain the distance learning program in perpetuity.

CTE Two-Year Innovation Grant Initiative

Updated May 2024

The Need: Innovative CTE Workforce Pathways for In-Demand Careers

- **Workforce shortages** in career and technical education (CTE) fields, including health care, construction, manufacturing, education and agriculture, impact services for communities and are a missed opportunity to boost community economic health while providing Montanans opportunities to work in high-wage, high-demand careers.
- More than 9,000 students across the Montana University System are studying CTE career fields, and they receive over 2,000 CTE credentials every year.
- A record 3,371 high school students earned college-level CTE credit in 2023, an increase of 600 students from one year ago.

- **9,000 postsecondary students studying CTE fields.**
- **2,000 CTE credentials awarded annually**
- **3,371 high school students earned college-level CTE credit, up 600 from 2022**

MUS Support for CTE

- **The Montana Year to Career Initiative** creates stackable credentials that teach the skills most needed for quick employment in high-demand industries in a year or less, while also showing how the training can help with getting an advanced degree. These short-term credential pathways offer affordable, easy access to higher education programs and provide options for leaving and entering.
- **MUS Sprint Degrees** are fast-track degree programs that are co-created with top Montana employers, to help students acquire the skills, knowledge, and experience that are sought-after for a satisfying and successful career. Private employer partners help with internship opportunities, student scholarships, and job placement.
- **Montana's Future at Work** is a is a grant program that enables Montana two-year colleges to collaborate with a partner high school and offer college-level CTE credentials to a group of students who can complete them before they finish high school. The funds can help promote the available opportunity.

Proposed Workforce Innovation Grant Program

Competitive grants offered to two-year colleges to develop creative programming to start or grow CTE pathways can help close the gap between Montanans with CTE credentials and in-demand career fields.

- The MUS aims to **build on existing support** by creating a Workforce Innovation Grant Program administered by OCHE for the MUS two-year colleges to support creative programming costs needed to start or grow CTE training pathways for **high-demand jobs and careers with a proven labor shortage and high wages.**
- Competitive priorities will include **accelerating programs**, substantial **industry partnership** and coordination, incorporation of high-quality internships and apprenticeships, enhancement of opportunities and program offerings to specific populations like the incarcerated, design of non-credit trainings in high-demand career fields.
- OCHE will collaborate with two-year campus leaders to implement the application process.

Montana's Two-Year Colleges Are Flexible and Can Meet the Demand

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Prison Education Initiative

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Highlights

- The partnership between the Department of Corrections and the MUS for Prison Education Programming is a critical part of the **MUS access mission**, as well as the system's commitment to **workforce development**. Workforce needs, combined with the need for education and training opportunities for incarcerated individuals to prepare them for employment and integration into the workforce, warrants enhanced and innovative programming.

Program Development

- Funding would be applied toward creating and implementing occupationally targeted education and training programs where: (1) **labor market demand** currently exists; and (2) industry employers can **and do** hire the formerly incarcerated.

The programs could include Prison Education Program (PEP) opportunities and pre-apprenticeship models in the fields of hospitality, skilled trades, heavy equipment operating, welding, light/micro manufacturing, and construction.

Mobile Lab Development

- Funding would be used to build, deploy, and operate more mobile occupationally focused training labs--such as welding labs and heavy equipment operating labs--to quickly make available equitable offerings at all prison facilities, and even expand offerings in facilities where there is no additional space.

DOC Teacher Investment

- Funds would cover the addition of three Department of Corrections teacher/instructor/facilitator FTE. As DOC capital projects authorized by HB 5 and HB 817 begin to come online, DOC will be able to **expand education and training offerings** at the Montana State Prison with new group and programming space.

Corrections Career Training

- Create a two-year applied science degree program at MT Tech Highlands College for corrections-related staff in Montana. The DOC would reimburse its staff for tuition costs as well as build the program into **career ladders** within the department.

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Biotech & Agricultural Research Initiative

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Highlights

- Montana has a growing and diverse biotechnology sector, with active **public-private partnerships** between biotechnology firms and Montana's universities. In recent years, Montana has led the nation in bioscience employment growth and, due in large part to growth in bioscience research, has ranked 2nd for growth in **university research**. A key next step for Montana's bio-sector is **building infrastructure**.

- Research and innovation in value-added agriculture are critical to grow Montana's agricultural economy. New positions at the Montana Agricultural Experiment Station will expand MSU's research enterprise and **grow Montana's bioeconomy** by adding higher-value food, feed, and industrial products to its expert portfolio.

Montana Bioscience Technology Transfer

- One-time state investment will bolster key facilities and ongoing supports for **university-industry partnerships** in medical bioscience spaces. Investments will include creating a clinical-certified good manufacturing process (cGMP) facility at the University of Montana as a new resource to support operation of clinical trials in state, outfit of existing lab space at MSU-Billings for a Center for Translational Medicine, and seed investment in technology transfer supports for early and mid-stage commercialization of innovations.

Small Business University Facility Vouchers

- This program proposes to provide Montana high tech firms support to leverage university services and equipment that would otherwise be cost-prohibitive. This subsidy will **help small firms**, including early-stage biotech companies, tackle early commercialization challenges, such as characterization and prototyping, using equipment and expertise they can seldom afford.

Actionable Water Data

- Since 2016, the Montana Climate Office at the University of Montana, with support from the Army Corps of Engineers and landowners around the state, has built a dense network of weather, soil, and snow monitoring stations across Montana and has launched analysis tools to provide actionable insights to farmers, water managers, and drought decision makers statewide. This includes new tools that assist state and federal drought decision makers in determining drought declarations that **release millions in aid annually to farmers across the state**. This request would provide for ongoing support of this monitoring station network, including expansion of real-time data tools relevant to farmers and water managers.

Value-added Agriculture

- This funding would support new research positions to expand MSU's work in value-added agriculture. The positions would engage with researchers and agricultural manufacturers to upscale the high-quality raw commodities generated in Montana. Value-added agriculture is important because it will (1) allow agricultural producers to capture more value for the products they produce; (2) identify new retail markets and market directly to consumers rather than through bulk commodity markets (which are largely wholesale); and (3) create **high-paying jobs** and increase product sales, which will provide an important **economic stimulus for the entire state**.

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