

Shared Policy Goals

2023 Legislature

The Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education agrees to partner with the Montana Legislature, represented by the Joint Subcommittee on Education to further the following Shared Policy Goals:

Financial Literacy and College Affordability: Ensure all campuses of the MUS provide financial literacy programs for students, including mandatory tutorials upon entry and ongoing communication with students through the financial aid process.

- Expand the Montana 10 student success intervention and evaluate its impact on affordability topics, including student retention, credit accumulation, and time-to-degree. If proven effective, evaluate options to expand Montana 10 program services to more Montana students.

Free Speech: Reaffirm the Montana University System's commitment to fostering environments that ensure the free expression and open exchange of ideas and viewpoints in accordance with the First Amendment. Examples include,

- Ensuring all campuses have policies and procedures that comply with the First Amendment and affirm the rights of individuals to freely express their views.
- Providing a system-wide training module for campus faculty and staff on free speech and expressive activities.
- Establishing the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education as a resource hub for training materials, guidance, and best practices for upholding rights guaranteed by the First Amendment.

Proficiency-based Education: Implement teaching methodologies and programs that facilitate the development of proficiency-based education opportunities.

- **Teacher Prep:** provide proficiency-based education modules/courses as part of Educator Prep Programs.
- **Credit for Prior Learning:** Improve and expand assessment-based approaches that recognize prior learning for college credit.
- **Digital Academy:** Refine the partnership between the MUS, the OPI, and the Montana Digital Academy so that the MTDA can serve as a portal to a broader range of course opportunities, including more online dual enrollment opportunities through the MUS.

Tribal College Relations:

- **American Indian Language and Culture:** Expand American Indian language, linguistic, and culture programming.
- **Tribal College/MUS Transfer:** Continue efforts to engage Tribal Colleges to improve the experience of students transferring between Tribal Colleges and MUS institutions.

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Career & Technical Education: Continue to develop and improve CTE opportunities, particularly those that leverage public/private partnerships and expand high school CTE pathways.

- **Sprint Degrees:** Establish and evaluate new accelerated degree pathways in in-demand fields (“Sprint Degrees”) in partnership with industry.
- **High School Student Access:** Expand CTE dual enrollment opportunities and pathways, particularly those that incorporate industry credentials that articulate with degree programs.

Data Sharing: Collaborate with the OPI and the DLI to deepen P20W data sharing partnerships in a manner that provides actionable insights to policymakers and educators and helps to streamline agency processes.

On behalf of the Office of Commissioner of Higher Education:

Clayton T. Christian
Commissioner of Higher Education

Date

On behalf of the Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Education:

Rep. David F. Bedey, Chairman

Date

Sen. Daniel Salomon, Vice Chairman

Date