Summer 2022 – Greetings!

Last school year, the MentorMT Initiative launched our first cohort of nearly 80 mentoring partners. We're off to a great start are now opening a second round of recruiting for the '22-23 school year!

Do you have a staff member, a colleague, or are you an **underprepared teacher** who is…

- Teaching outside their grade level or subject area?
- Teaching under emergency authorization?
- Teaching on a provisional license while working toward full licensure?
- Teaching in a rural school during their first or second year of teaching?

The **MentorMT** program offers **FREE** precision support by providing teachers with…

- One-to-one mentoring that **addresses teachers' needs** and **respects their time**
- Experienced mentors assigned by similar **grade level and subject area**
- A focus on **content, curriculum, and instructional** support that is non-evaluative
- **No cost to schools** and a **$500 stipend** each year for participating teachers

MentorMT can accept **up to 30** additional underprepared Montana teachers to be matched with a mentor in August for mentoring that continues through the 2022-23 school year. All grade levels and subject areas are eligible; however, teachers working in **rural schools** receive priority consideration.

Apply to enroll yourself or your underprepared teacher(s) in MentorMT in **two easy steps**:

1. Read the attached overview for more details about the program.
2. Complete this brief **MentorMT Teacher Enrollment Application**

Administrators: please discuss this opportunity with your teacher(s) before enrolling them so you can confirm their willingness to participate in the program and actively engage with an assigned mentor.

Applications will be reviewed on a **rolling basis** and prioritized in the order they are submitted.
The first round of applications will be **reviewed beginning August 1, 2022.**

If you have questions about the MentorMT application process, please **contact:**
Anne Keith, MentorMT Outreach Specialist (anne.keith@montana.edu).

Mentoring partners will be matched by grade level, subject area, and rural status as resources allow. Due to funding and capacity limitations, not all teachers may receive a mentor this year.

MentorMT Program Director/ASPIRE Project Co-Director:
Dr. Jennifer Luebeck - Professor, Mathematics Education
Dept. of Mathematical Sciences, Montana State University
Contact: jennifer.luebeck@montana.edu or 406-994-5341

MentorMT is an initiative of the ASPIRE Project MSU Center for Research on Rural Education Funder: Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The **ASPIRE** project, housed in **MSU's Center for Research on Rural Education**, envisions a comprehensive approach for reducing Montana's rural teacher shortage and ensuring that all students have well-prepared teachers. The two-year *Advancing Support, Preparation, and Innovation in Rural Education (ASPIRE)* project is funded by a $1.5 million grant from Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies.

The project's three initiatives represent a far-reaching effort to address the critical shortage of teachers in rural Montana, strengthen the teaching profession across the state, and ensure equitable instruction for Montana's students, regardless of location.



The **MentorMT initiative** addresses Montana's critical rural teacher shortage by providing **FREE expert mentoring for teachers who lack teacher preparation and/or a teaching license**. When rural school leaders are unable to hire or retain a qualified and fully licensed teacher, the necessary alternative may be to reassign teachers outside their licensure areas or hire an adult from within the local community who has content expertise but little or no formal preparation. State data indicate that over the past three years, Montana principals hired nearly 400 people who lacked full teaching credentials.

MentorMT offers **grade-level and subject-area mentoring** for underprepared teachers, building skills for those who have a limited content foundation and/or lack teacher preparation in the area where they are currently assigned. We recruit and train experienced Montana teachers to provide one-on-one mentoring, instructional guidance, and curricular support for educators who are placed in classrooms while working toward teacher licensure.

Mentoring for up to 75 teachers each year is provided through **blended virtual and in-person formats**. Mentors offer practical assistance, high-quality resources, and exemplars to support effective teaching. Mentoring partners access OPI's Teacher Learning Hub to join monthly networking discussions and collaborate on "Partners in Practice" instructional activities. More information about MentorMT program components and expectations is available upon request.

If you have questions or concerns about the MentorMT program and its benefits, please **contact Jennifer Luebeck**, MentorMT Program Director (jennifer.luebeck@montana.edu).

The ASPIRE project is administered by the Montana State University Center for Research on Rural Education and funded by Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies