



EASTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY CREATES RURAL PARTNERSHIPS TO CLOSE GEOGRAPHIC SHORTAGES

Eastern Washington University (EWU), Wenatchee Valley College, Big Bend Community College, Walla Walla Community College, partner districts, and North Central ESD 171 all work together to recruit and provide an opportunity for district employees to consider a career in teaching. This rural area has a high Latinx population and enrolling local candidates in the Transition to Teaching (T2T) program has increased opportunities for more diverse and underrepresented candidates to access teacher preparation programs. Participants can enroll in either alternative route 1, 2, or 4. Through the PESB alternative route block grant (ARBG), T2T has been able to support 29 graduates. In the summer of 2020, over seventy applicants applied and only twenty slots were filled with ARBG grant funds. Without grant funds, many of the candidates the program is designed for will struggle to enroll in any alternate route program.

“The alternative route Transition to Teaching (T2T) program at Eastern Washington University (EWU) has grown considerably in the last three years. Partnerships with school districts wanting to participate in the program have more than doubled. We have expanded to three cohorts and added the new bilingual add-on endorsement to the already in place SPED and ELL add-on endorsements. The layers of support from the candidates, the school districts, ESD’s, two-year colleges, and EWU make a huge difference in the success of the T2T program. Most importantly the alternative route block grant (ARBG) has removed a barrier for our candidates. Without those grant funds, many of the candidates the program is designed to recruit will struggle on their decision to enroll in any alternate route program.” -Dr. Jan Hartmann, Director, Transition to Teaching Program (T2T)

Why is the Transition to Teacher Program successful?

EWU T2T program is focused on:

- Reducing barriers for all candidates when considering entry into the teaching field including tuition support, low travel or distance to preparation program/classes, individual support, continued employment with district and tutoring support for testing requirements.
- Programming is designed to address the socio-emotional needs of candidates by developing a community within the cohort model, summer academy, intensive mentor and supervisor support, and a program director with strong partnership ties to participating school districts.
- Candidates receive a “one-year guarantee” of support after graduation. During their first year of instruction, EWU supports teacher success after graduation and offers assistance when needed. Faculty and program staff are available to assist a struggling graduate if requested by the candidate or their district. In addition, EWU assures that each candidate is able to apply teaching strategies, classroom management, methods, and the measurement and evaluation process necessary for success.

“For many of our smaller, more rural districts, staff turnover can be a big issue. Smaller towns often settle for hires living outside their boundaries in larger cities and then later lose those



hires to openings in those more populated surrounding areas. The alternative route to certification programs are attracting local, community-based individuals in the smaller districts into the profession. Many of these “homegrown” teachers are local community members who plan to live and continue working in the small districts. A big win for these communities and schools.” -Bill Eagle, Associate Director of Student Success and Learning, North Central ESD

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