



February 25, 2026

Dr. Stefani Gray Hicswa  
Chancellor  
Montana State University - Billings  
1500 University Drive  
Billings, MT 59101-0298

Dear Chancellor Hicswa:

This letter serves as formal notification and official record of action taken by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) at its meeting on January 27-30, 2026, concerning the Fall 2025 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness of Montana State University - Billings.

### **Accreditation**

Reaffirm Accreditation

### **Commendations**

The Commission commends Montana State University - Billings for:

1. Its exemplary commitment to fostering a culture of care that permeates every level of the institution. Montana State University Billings demonstrates a deep and sustained dedication to student well-being, belonging, and success.
2. Its use of data, in particular disaggregated student success data, to identify potential equity gaps and provide effective support to all students.
3. The outstanding dedication demonstrated by its employees, who consistently convey a deep commitment to the mission and values of the institution. A strong culture of collaboration and mutual respect among colleagues is clearly evident, contributing to a positive and cohesive working environment.

### **Recommendations Substantially in Compliance but in Need of Improvement**

The Commission recommends that Montana State University - Billings:

- Recommendation 1: Fall 2025 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness - Enhance communication and training around financial planning and decision making. (2020 Standard(s) 2.E.3; 1.B.3)
- Recommendation 2: Fall 2025 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness - Complete the implementation of its General Education assessment process. (2020 Standard(s) 1.C.6)
- Recommendation 3: Fall 2025 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness - Widely publish disaggregated indicators of student achievement on the institution's public website. (2020 Standard(s) 1.D.3)

### **Future Evaluations**

- Ad Hoc Report Spring 2027
  - Recommendation 1: Fall 2025 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness
  - Recommendation 2: Fall 2025 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness
  - Recommendation 3: Fall 2025 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness
- Mid-Cycle Review Fall 2028
- Year 6 - Standard 2 - Policies, Regulations, and Financial Review Fall 2031
- Year 7 - Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness Fall 2032

NWCCU is committed to an accreditation process that adds value to institutions while contributing to public accountability, and we thank you for your continued support of this process. If you have questions about any of the information in this letter, please contact your staff liaison, Dr. Gita Bangera, at [gbangera@nwccu.org](mailto:gbangera@nwccu.org).

Sincerely,



Dr. Selena M. Grace  
President

cc: Ms. Kathleen Thatcher, Director of Assessment and Accreditation  
Mr. Todd Buchanan, Board Chair  
Dr. Alexandra Fitts, Vice Provost Emeritus, University of Alaska Fairbanks  
Mr. Clayton Christian, Commissioner of Higher Education, Montana University System