

Montana Center for Inclusive Education at Montana State University Billings

Fiscal Year 2025 Annual Report July 1, 2024—June 30, 2025

The vision of the Montana Center for Inclusive Education (MCIE) is the creation of a fully inclusive society that values diversity. The mission supporting this vision states that MCIE serves the diverse population of Montana and provides continuing professional development opportunities for educators and direct service providers. MCIE also provides grant management and fiscal management for the Montana State University Billings (MSUB). MCIE is not funded through tuition income.

MCIE programs include:

- Extended Campus
- Region III Comprehensive System of Personnel Development
- State Personnel Development Grant
- Movin' On in Montana
- Work Incentives Planning and Assistance Program
- Evaluation of the Office of Public Instruction - State Personnel Development Grant through the US Dept. of Education to Implement the Montana Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)
- Partnered with the University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning to grow the Montana Strategic Instruction Model through support by the Educational Promise Foundation
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Future Priorities

- Hire a new director for the Montana Center for Inclusive Education
- Combine and expand a Program Coordinator position to provide professional learning opportunities to educators and service providers.
- To create a Program Coordinator position to coordinate the Movin' On program and other youth-based camp/programs.
- Apply for funding opportunities that support the vision and mission.
- Provide professional development to schools and community organizations.
- Continue to strengthen our partnerships within the Montana University System.
- Continue to support the Institute for Neurodiversity at MSU Billings.

Faculty Award for Exceptional Support of Students with Disabilities

Dr. Elaine Westbrook Assistant Professor, Educational Theory and Practice, COE



Dr. Westbrook joined the MSU Billings faculty in 2021 and teaches integrated science courses and labs to elementary education majors. She hosts, co-designs, and facilitates informal STEM curricula for the Movin'On Camp (MCIE), GeoSpatial Skills (MSU), and the Co-ed and Girls' STEM camps (MSUB). She also coordinates outreach STEM activities, which involves MSU Billings graduate and undergraduate student facilitators in nearby rural and Native American communities. .

Dr. Paula L. McMahon Dept. Chair; Associate Professor, Rehabilitation and Human Services, CHPS

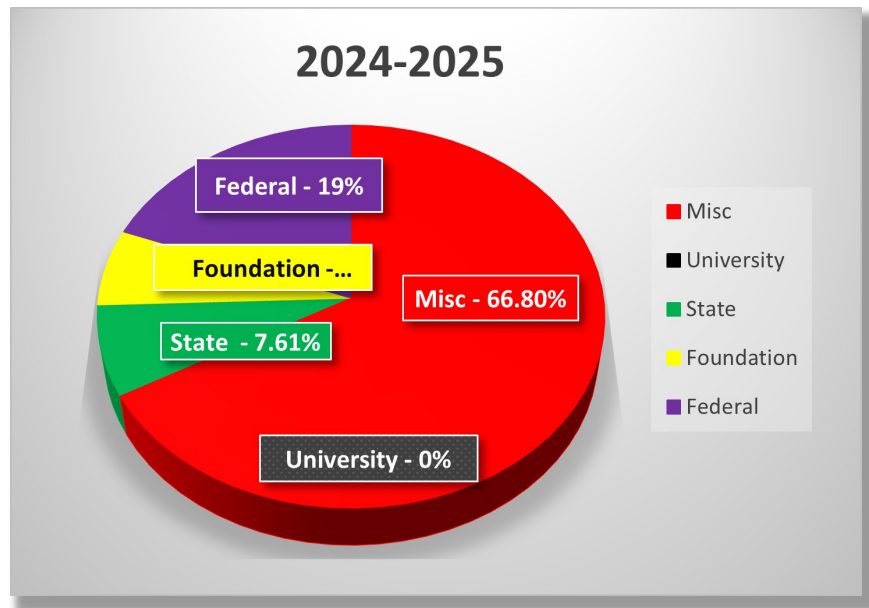


Dr. McMahon's areas of specialization are the Americans with Disabilities Act, Ethics, and disability Rights with a deep commitment to community integration, inclusive employment practices, factors impacting disclosure of disability, and transition for students with disabilities into postsecondary opportunities. She has presented numerous times on the national, state, and local level on these topics. One of her students noted that Dr. McMahon "has gone above and beyond to make sure students with disabilities get access to her materials." Dr. McMahon has truly been an advocate of her students encouraging them in their academic journeys towards realizing their dreams

MSUB Collaboration

- College of Allied Health Professions and Science
- College of Education
- College of Liberal Arts & Sciences
- Disability Support Services
- Extended Campus at City College
- Grants & Sponsored Programs
- Native American Achievement Center
- Neurodiversity Institute
- TRIO

Montana Center for Inclusive Education Financial Report



- Foundation: \$89,300.00.**

The MCIE utilized the Endowment interest to partially fund year three of its pilot project, Movin' On in Montana. The endowment interest was also utilized to fund ten student scholarships and two faculty awards.

- Miscellaneous Income: \$921,120.66.**

Miscellaneous income includes Montana Vocational Rehabilitation and Blind Services, University of Kansas consulting, SPDG, Murdock Foundation, and Extended Campus fees.

- University Funding: \$0.00.**

Due to University budget cuts, MCIE is now 100% self funded.

- External State Funding: \$105,000.00.**

State funding received from the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, Vocational Rehabilitation and Blind Services, and the Montana Office of Public Instruction.

- External Federal Funding: \$263,500.00.**

Federal funding received from the Social Security Administration.

•**Total managed funds: \$1,378,920.66**

Highlights of Fiscal Year 2025

- Three proposals were submitted and awarded from state and federal agencies. Two proposals were renegotiated and given two-year extensions.
- In partnership with the Office of Public Instructions Montana Autism Education Project planned the first Mountain West Neurodiversity Conference at MSUB for a three day gathering in September 2025.
- Movin' On in Montana is a program designed to provide Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) to high school students with disabilities to explore post-secondary opportunities. The program is partially funded by the Montana Center Foundation and the Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) through Vocational Rehabilitation and Blinds Services. During the 2024-2025 academic year approximately 35 students participated in three campus visits and virtual events. The summer camp had 16 students from across the state participate in a residential experience for a week.
- Work Incentives Planning and Assistance Program (WIPA) received 312 new referrals for benefits counseling services for Montana, Idaho, North Dakota, and South Dakota for July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025, with an active caseload of 567 beneficiaries. Of these referrals, we provided benefits counseling for 20 transition youths and 15 veterans, 45 individuals are working full time and 206 part time workers.
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- MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AND TRANSITIONS Vocational Rehabilitation Blind Services (VRBS) contracted with Montana Center for Inclusive Education to provide benefits counseling services for their clients who they identified as receiving social security benefits and thinking about going to work. Our Community Partner Work Incentive Coordinator received 164 referrals, completed 103 intakes and wrote 50 benefit summary and analysis reports from July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025.
- Region III Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (Region III CSPD) offered 27 professional development activities to service providers, school personnel, educators, para-professionals, and teachers-in-training. These educational opportunities were funded through a grant provided by the Office of Public Instruction. Approximately 533 individuals participated in professional development.
- Region III CSPD continued to participate in the five-year SPDG grant piloting the implementation of Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS). Within Region III there are three school districts selected to participate in the project (Lavina, Park City, and Lewistown). Entering its fifth year, Region III CSPD created a pilot project to have more districts implement MTSS within their school and across the region. School districts participating in the pilot project are: Broadview, Winnett, Canyon Creek, Huntley Project, Roy, Reed Point, Blue Creek, Red Lodge, Independent, Bridger, Grass Range, and Fromberg. Though the grant was completed at the end of the fifth year Region III CSPD committed to MTSS within the region with funding from the CSPD grant to create a third co-hort by adding two new schools: Roundup and Pryor.
- Ten scholarships totaling \$10,000 were awarded to students with disabilities at Montana State University Billings (MSUB). Two \$500 scholarships were awarded to two faculty/staff members nominated by MSUB students with disabilities.
- Wrote and received a proposal to hire an AmeriCorps/Vista employee through the City of Billings to begin in August 2025.