INSTITUTIONAL REPORT:
CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT OPTION

Onsite Visit: April 14-16, 2013

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I. Overview and Conceptual Framework

I.1 The University of Montana: Historical Context and Unique Characteristics

The University of Montana is one of two doctoral research universities in Montana and serves as the flagship of four affiliated campuses. For more than a century, it has maintained a liberal arts tradition as the foundation for undergraduate, professional, and graduate education. Breadth of programming and a solid interdisciplinary foundation for all University education foster the critical thinking and integrative problem solving skills needed by 21st century citizens. Located in the second-largest and most diverse urban center in the state, UM flourishes in a setting that combines international cosmopolitanism, cultural diversity, social awareness, natural wilderness, and scenic beauty. It takes pride in the engagement of its students beyond the campus. Indeed, the articulation of programs responsive to the challenges and demands of local, national, and global communities continues to set UM apart. UM maintains an Office for Civic Engagement and is home to the Montana Campus Compact, part of a national coalition dedicated to promoting community service, civic engagement, and service learning in higher education. UM’s emphasis on student engagement has earned it the Community Engagement Classification by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and a listing on the national President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll.

I.2 The University of Montana: Mission

The University of Montana Mission statement provides direction and a foundation from which all programs develop.

The University of Montana-Missoula pursues academic excellence as demonstrated by the quality of curriculum and instruction, student performance, and faculty professional accomplishments. The University accomplishes this mission, in part, by providing unique educational experiences through the integration of the liberal arts, graduate study, and professional training with international and interdisciplinary emphases. The University also educates competent and humane professionals and informed, ethical, and engaged citizens of local and global communities; and provides basic and applied research, technology transfer, cultural outreach, and service benefiting the local community, region, State, nation, and the world.

I.3 The University of Montana: Professional Education Unit (PEU)

The Dean of the Phyllis J. Washington College of Education and Human Sciences (PJWCoEHS) is designated as the head of the Professional Education Unit (PEU). The Professional Education Unit at UM includes programs in the Phyllis J. Washington College of Education and Human Sciences as well as programs in the College of Arts and Sciences, College of Visual and Performing Arts and School of Business Administration. Collectively, these four schools and colleges enroll undergraduate and graduate students in initial P-12 and secondary licensure programs, advanced degrees for teachers, and programs preparing other school professionals. The primary vehicle for coordination of the PEU is the Professional Education Council (PEC). Membership in the PEC includes all programs in the PEU, P-12 practitioners, and candidates enrolled in professional education programs. The PEC was established in 2006 as a University Committee and the bylaws are currently in revision to reflect the continuous improvement model. Through monthly meetings as well as Standing Committees, the PEU makes
recommendations relative to UM, the PEU, and program specific data review and continuous improvement initiatives including program changes, course or degree modifications, or other curriculum and policy requests (PEU – PEC Description). Significant changes of relevance to the PEU since the 2005 NCATE review include the following.

Montana
- Montana revised the teacher preparation requirements to meet the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Highly Qualified Teachers.
  - Embedded in the educator preparation program as a condition for recommending new elementary teachers for licensure, Montana adopted a three-pronged approach in 2006 that included content coursework GPA, assessment of content knowledge demonstrated during student teaching, and a passing score on the Praxis II Elementary Content Knowledge test.
  - Beginning 2010, elementary and secondary candidates with a minor in a core academic subject were required to pass the applicable Praxis II subject knowledge test as a condition for licensure recommendation.
  - Approved for implementation Spring 2013, Montana adopted a three-pronged content assessment approach for Secondary and K-12 Teacher Education candidates that consists of content coursework GPA, an assessment of content knowledge demonstrated during student teaching, and a passing score on the appropriate Praxis II content knowledge test.
- The Montana Board of Public Education revised the Professional Educator Preparation Program Standards and Procedures (PEPPS) in 2009, which incorporate Indian Education For All (IEFA).

The University of Montana
- On October 15, 2010, The University of Montana welcomed its 17th President, Dr. Royce C. Engstrom (Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs 2007-2010) and Dr. Perry J. Brown became Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.
- UM 2020: Building a University for the Global Century was adopted in 2010 as The University of Montana strategic plan. This plan established six strategic issues for the University in addition to the six initiatives and goals of the 2009 Academic Strategic Plan.

The Professional Education Unit
- In fall 2007, the Professional Education Council was established as a University Committee to provide governance for the Professional Education Unit. The Dean of the School of Education (as it was then known) was officially designated Unit Head and membership included representatives of the PEU programs, P-12 practitioners, and candidate representatives.

The Phyllis J. Washington College of Education and Human Sciences (formerly School of Education)
- Dr. Roberta D. Evans served as interim dean of the School of Education (as it was then known) and following a national search, assumed leadership as dean in May of 2007.
- The College structure was reformed to include four departments: Department of Counselor Education, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, Department of Educational Leadership, and the Department of Health and Human Performance. The Department of Communicative Sciences and Disorders was reestablished at UM in 2008 after a 20-year hiatus and became the fifth department in the College.
- The School of Education was renamed the College of Education and Human Sciences in Spring 2009, recognizing its growth in mission and program expansion.
The grand opening of the Phyllis J. Washington Education Center (PJWEC) fall 2009 brought state-of-the-art teaching and learning facilities to faculty, students, and extended community members of the PEU. With 27,000 sq. ft. of additional space, the PJWEC includes high-tech classrooms that allow faculty to model the use of technology, classrooms specifically designed to teach math and science instructional methods, distance-learning studios, and an on-site early childhood program to provide early clinical experience.

Simultaneously with the grand opening of the Phyllis J. Washington Education Center, the College was officially designated the Phyllis J. Washington College of Education and Human Sciences to honor distinguished alumnus, friend, and donor Mrs. Phyllis J. Washington.

Dr. Bill McCaw (EDLD) joined Dr. Sally Brewer (C&I) as NCATE Co-Coordinator Fall 2010.

Due to extended illness, Dr. Sally Brewer resigned from her role as NCATE Co-Coordinator, and Dr. Trent Atkins (C&I) joined Dr. Bill McCaw as NCATE Co-Coordinator Spring, 2011. Dr. Brewer continued to support the team until her passing on May 5, 2011.

The College launched the comprehensive Educator Preparation Assessment System (E-PAS) Spring 2012 which facilitates the systematic collection of data for all PEU programs. E-PAS serves as the cornerstone for continuous improvement by supporting data-informed decisions through timely analysis, meaningful reports at the individual program and Unit level, and the development of Action Activities Reports.

I.4 The University of Montana Conceptual Framework, institutional standards and candidate proficiencies related to expected knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions.

The Professional Education Unit’s Conceptual Framework (abbreviated) places central value on learning as a collaborative endeavor. It is the unit’s intent that professional education candidates at The University of Montana will experience a cohesive learning community during their own preparation, with the goal that they will be disposed and equipped to create communities of learners in their own future educational settings. To this end, the faculty identified three essential elements of learning communities, which form organizing themes that permeate all the programs and drive the candidate proficiency outcomes including the Integration of Ideas, Cooperative Endeavors, and Respect for Diversity and Individual Worth.

The PEU’s intent is to prepare candidates with the knowledge, dispositions, and skills to create communities of learners in their own future professional settings. The themes of community engagement, ethical behavior, respect for human dignity, and professional competence resonate throughout the UM Mission Statement above and in the Strategic Issues set forth in the UM 2020 strategic plan. Strategic Issue 1, Partnering for Student Success, emphasizes student learning and engagement including a focus on service learning and integrating the early college curriculum as a key strategy. Strategic Issue 2, Education for a Global Century, articulates UM’s commitment to preparing graduates to make positive impacts and become engaged citizens in a world that is increasingly interconnected.

Initial and advanced programs identify and assess essential knowledge, skills and behaviors including dispositions, diversity, and technology. At the initial licensure level, nine student performance outcomes have been established to guide candidates from their initial field experience through the student teaching semester. These outcomes are linked to the Conceptual Framework and the Montana Professional Educator Preparation Program Standards (PEPPS), which align with standards established by the Interstate New Teacher Assessment Support Consortium Standards (INTASC) (See Exhibit 1.5.c). Advanced programs in the PEU have aligned their programs with the Conceptual Framework as well as standards appropriate to the area of study (See Exhibit 1.5.c and Advanced Programs and the Conceptual Framework)
The Conceptual Framework has not been significantly altered since the previous NCATE review. Over time, members of the PEC have determined that the key themes of the Conceptual Framework and focus on learning as a collaborative endeavor continue to provide an accurate and clear vision for our programs. Minor revisions have included 1) updating the knowledge base with a particular focus on emerging practices in professional learning communities and 2) curriculum realignment following the transition from ten student performance outcomes to nine in the initial licensure program. On a broader scale, the integration of the comprehensive Educator Preparation Assessment System (E-PAS) has a significant impact in the full alignment and assessment of the Conceptual Framework at both initial and advanced levels. As articulated in the PEC Bylaws, the Conceptual Framework is reviewed on a five year cycle due AY 2012-13. In accordance, planning for a comprehensive review was launched at the October 2012 PEC meeting.

II. Unit Standards

Standard 1: Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Professional Dispositions

1.1 University of Montana candidates meet professional, state, and institutional standards and have a positive impact on P-12 student learning.

Elementary and Secondary Initial Licensure programs

Candidate assessment data sources and results are contained in the Educator Assessment System (E-PAS) comprehensive assessment table. Admissions data and key assessment data represent initial licensure programs and advanced programs. The key assessments for initial licensure programs are the same, whereas each of the advanced programs have unique key assessments. Montana is a member of NCATE’s State Partnership Program and conducts the subject matter reviews. A description of the Montana program review protocol is included in the Montana Professional Educator Preparation Program Standards (PEPPS) and Procedures Manual (Section II, State Review Protocol, Pages 81-107) and the State Accreditation Reports are located in Exhibit I B).

Admission data indicate students entering initial licensure programs are well prepared academically. Admission requirements which include a writing sample, content grade point average and recommendations from faculty outside of the Phyllis J. Washington College of Education and Human Sciences (PJWCoEHS) show that overall, candidates: 1.) have earned grade point averages that exceed the University’s mean GPA; 2.) are developmentally proficient in written communication; and 3.) come highly recommended by faculty across campus. More specifically, since the spring of 2007, we have admitted 650 students into the elementary program. The mean GPA for the group of students is 3.23. We have admitted 743 students into our secondary program and that group of students has an average GPA of 3.32. Looking specifically at content area GPAs, students in our elementary program have a GPA of 3.25, and secondary students have a content GPA of 3.43. What follow are data highlights about the selection process for our elementary education students:

• Between 2010 and 2012, there was an average of 306 enrolled pre-education students per year.
• Between 2010 and 2012, there was an average of 99 admissions into the elementary education program per year.
• Assuming half of the pre-education population was eligible to apply to the program, 65% were admitted into the program.
• That is, 35% self-selected, or were “screened” out of elementary education.

Across all of our licensure programs since 2007, 1372 students have applied, and 126 (9.2%) were denied admission. Given these high standards, and a systematic pre-advising process, only the best applicants are accepted into our teacher education programs.

To ensure effective professional development, candidates are further assessed in the following manner. First, candidates must obtain at least a C- in any education course in order for it to count for credit. A survey of actual candidate performance in education coursework shows that overall; students’ performance far exceeds this minimal requirement. In addition, data from three key assessments taken from EDU 370 Integrating Technology in Education, EDU 407 Ethics and Policy in Education, and EDU 345 Exceptionalities and Classroom Management demonstrate that candidates are gaining deep conceptual understanding in the core areas of the licensure programs that are also clearly linked to our Conceptual Framework.

First, in EDU 370 Integrating Technology in Education, candidates’ ability to use and integrate technology in their lesson plans is demonstrated by performance indicators related to the key assessment titled, “Technofied Lesson Plan.” This key assessment requires that candidates are not only proficient with the use of technology, but also are aware of 21st Century technology skills, and can link use of technology to student learning. Second, candidate understanding of professional ethics and ethical decision-making in EDU 407 Ethics and Policy in Education is demonstrated in performance on an “Ethics Case Analysis” that integrates knowledge of the classroom context, with the NEA Code of Ethics, the Montana Code of Ethics, and demonstrates a professional behavior that exemplifies the belief in fairness for all students. Third, the EDU 345 Exceptionalities and Classroom Management key assessment demonstrates candidates’ ability to blend knowledge of individual student development, behavior, and group dynamics with knowledge of the classroom environment to compose a working classroom management plan.

Surveying candidate performance across these key assessments, and within the context of all educational coursework leads to several conclusions. First, our candidates perform well academically when compared against the overall university student population, and when compared against individual course criteria. Second, candidates are able to integrate and apply fundamental concepts related to effective instruction, including the use of technology to enhance student learning, how to monitor student learning, create a comprehensive, but developmentally appropriate classroom management plan, and make ethical decisions in the classroom. Third, the learning experience (core learning goals, content, assignments, and assessments) in each of the courses that include a key assessment is relatively consistent not only across individual courses, but also between the various instructors that teach different sections of the same course.

Next, candidates are assessed at three different levels of clinical field experience. Knowledge, skills, and dispositions are monitored with progressive frequency and intensity with each advancing field experience up to, and including student teaching. A review of performance indicators reveals that candidates earn high scores using multiple assessors across all clinical experiences. Also, within this phase of assessment, the Department of Curriculum and Instruction (C&I) recently piloted a Teacher Work Sample project that gauges pupil learning as a function of candidate instruction. While this data only spans a few semesters, it provides encouraging evidence linking pupil achievement with candidate performance in the classroom.

At the conclusion of the program, candidates apply for licensure, a process that involves analysis of three data points: 1.) candidate content grade point average as documented on transcripts, 2.) pedagogical content knowledge as judged by the candidate’s classroom mentor teacher, and 3.) scores obtained on PRAXIS II Content Exam. Through this process, 100% of our
candidates meet licensure requirements. Additionally, 93% of our candidates pass the PRAXIS exam on the first attempt compared to an 83% pass rate across all other applicable schools in Montana. For elementary candidates, PRAXIS scores are 10% above the national median, a fact which corresponds well with candidates’ elevated content area grade point averages at graduation. Finally, of UM’s 290 students who have completed the Praxis, 31% have scored in the top 15% of test takers nationwide, earning them the ETS Recognition of Excellence Award. In exit surveys and surveys of principal satisfaction with our graduates, employers rate teacher effectiveness the highest amongst other items and graduates of our program tend to rate themselves as effective and prepared for their work. Further, students receive high ratings during clinical experiences on all of our performance outcomes. Specific to Performance Outcome #4 (Selects and designs appropriate and authentic means of assessing student learning and progress) candidates have a mean score of 3.47 during the third clinical experience and 3.76 during student teaching. Given a maximum score of four, these results not only show excellent ratings, they also show growth. Additionally, for our elementary students, analyses indicate that on average, the K-8 pupils they teach experience an 18% gain on candidate impact projects (using a pre/post design). Finally, on Performance Outcome #9 (Reflects on professional responsibilities and demonstrates commitment to fairness and the ability of all to learn), at the third field experience candidate’s receive an average mean rating of 3.76, and during student teaching candidate receive a mean rating of 3.91. Once again, candidates begin with a high rating and experience growth over time.

Advanced and Other School Professional Programs

Advanced and other school professional programs within the Professional Education Unit at The University of Montana routinely examine candidate and program data to inform programmatic decisions. This data includes national content exams, GPAs, course grades, specific assignment scores, specific rubric criteria data, candidate feedback, alumni, and employer surveys. Program curricula are aligned with the Unit’s Conceptual Framework and the Montana Professional Educator Preparation Program Standards (PEPPS), which contain specific state approved content standards typically aligned with national standards. The Educational Leadership Program and M.A. in English Teaching aligned their programs to specific national standards and within the Unit three programs are National Accredited. Advanced Music with a Specialization in Music Education is accredited through the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM), School Counseling is accredited through the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) and our new Communicative Sciences and Disorders program has accreditation pending through the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CAA). Finally, the School Psychology program is recognized by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP).

A holistic review of the data reveals that program completers do very well across a number of reliable and valid indicators. For example, in 2011 and 2012, candidates in the first two graduating classes had a 100% Praxis exam pass rate and all graduates are currently employed in the profession. School Psychology interns have received consistently high ratings from consumers 2010-12 for both Professional Skills (3.98, 4.0, 3.85) and Personal characteristics (4.0 all three years) using a scale 1-4 scale (1 poor, 4 excellent). In addition, candidates who have completed advanced coursework attest through anonymous course evaluation to the applicability and excellence of these classes to their professional development.

1.2.b Continuous Improvement: Summary of data-based activities and changes
Data collected and reviewed have led to efforts to transform candidate preparation in the elementary licensure program since the last accreditation visit. It was clear that elementary education candidates were not satisfied with how classroom management was being addressed. Three years ago, in response to candidate evaluation data, anecdotal conversations with candidates and graduate exit surveys a new course in classroom management was created and offered within the third block of clinical experience. Adding a course in classroom and behavioral management that integrated information with actual clinical experience allowed candidates to practice specific techniques in classroom management under the close supervision of clinical field instructors.

Extremely strong candidate satisfaction with clinical experiences, coupled with a need to increase focus on assessment, early literacy and early numeracy have led to reconsideration of the relationship between coursework and clinical experiences. In collaboration with the Unit, the Department of Curriculum and Instruction is currently in the process of reconfiguring the overall teacher education model to address content weaknesses in assessment, literacy, and numeracy by strengthening the linkage between university classroom instruction and clinical experiences. Additionally, the program is increasing the number of hours candidates will spend in their clinical experiences, as well as the amount of time faculty will spend with candidates in the field (Program Modifications). As part of this reconfiguration, the program will intensify focus on candidates’ ability to demonstrate their effectiveness via a capstone project during student teaching called the Candidate Impact Documentary (CID).

Advanced and Other School Professional Programs

Advanced and other school professional programs within the Professional Education Unit routinely examine data in formal and informal ways and use these data to inform program decisions. In some programs such as in M.A. English (Teaching), courses are revised in a formative manner and take student performance, reflection, and critique into account. One significant change in the M.A. English (Teaching) program during the period under review has been the move to require candidates to respond to social justice educational reforms and the implementation of Montana’s constitutionally supported “Indian Education for All” during the coursework. Various written work and inquiry demonstration lessons are critiqued for their attention or lack thereof to the foundational element of the Unit’s Conceptual Framework of Respect for Diversity and Individual Worth. In Summer 2009, only 1 person’s coursework focused on social justice; in Summer 2012, all 19 participants focused on social justice implementation in their coursework.

The School Psychology program has examined data and anecdotal evidence based upon consumer and supervisor evaluations to focus on professional work characteristics. School Psychology faculty have increased communication with onsite supervisors regarding the candidate’s professional work characteristics such as dress, ability/confidence to work collaboratively with other professionals, punctuality, and issues of interpersonal functioning as well as committing to an increased effort for faculty to model the appropriate professional work characteristics.

During the 2011-2012 Academic Year, the Creative Pulse (an interdisciplinary M.A. program in Fine Arts, Integrated Arts and Education Option that is housed in the College of Visual and Performing Arts) embarked on a major strategic planning process that resulted in a shared vision and mission for the program. This planning process resulted in articulated and aligned courses, program goals, student learning outcomes, and the assessment of those outcomes through formative and summative measures.
After the review of past data of the Culminating Educational Leadership Presentation, faculty in the Educational Leadership Department redesigned the assessment criteria for this exit exam in the autumn 2010 semester. Candidate assessment data and post exam interviews informed the change from an assessment with six criteria to an expanded assessment with 11 criteria articulated over three performance levels (Unacceptable, Acceptable, and Exemplary) for each of the 11 criteria.

Based on graduate and employer feedback, the Master’s degree program in Curriculum and Instruction has recently undergone changes that will result in an increased focus on clinical experiences, demonstrating teaching effectiveness, and demonstrating content knowledge. Faculty have worked to improve the admissions process, more clearly articulate program outcomes, refine key assessments, and bring a more research-oriented focus to the program (Graduate Handbook).

1.2.b Continuous Improvement: Plans for sustaining and enhancing performance

Elementary and Secondary Teacher Preparation:

The State of Montana issues licenses to teach K-8 or 5-12, with no requirement for specialized knowledge involved in teaching in a junior high, or middle school. Because an elementary degree provides versatility for a school district, many will hire a K-8 licensed teacher to teach content-heavy classes in junior high/middle schools. But the versatility comes at the cost of depth of preparation in the content areas a teacher is assigned. For example, a middle school math teacher with an elementary teaching license will come to the classroom with 12 credits of elementary math coursework and 3 credits of methods, compared to a secondary-level preparation in math education that requires from 31 to 41 credits in a teaching major. Initial conversations have been held to engage the College of Arts and Sciences in a collaborative effort to create teaching minors for elementary candidates who are interested in teaching in junior high/middle schools.

The Unit has begun to study the details associated with intensifying the clinical experience for our candidates. Graduate exit survey data provide clear evidence that candidates value clinical experiences more so than any other aspect of the program. At the same time, schools have greater needs for external resources, given the accountability demands being placed on them. A pilot study currently in progress at a local K-8 district is providing valuable data regarding the feasibility of implementing a new residency clinical model. The new model not only increases the amount of time candidates will serve in schools, but also involves shifting the curriculum toward a clinical model. The next three years will involve collaborative efforts among faculty resulting in coursework that integrates content and theory within semester blocks that are focused on practice.

The State of Montana codified a constitutional requirement that all Montana students have access to a curriculum that addresses historical and contemporary knowledge of American Indians in Montana. The law, known as Indian Education for All (IEFA) makes it necessary for pre-service teachers to not only have access to high quality curricula but to have ample opportunities to teach within this curriculum. The C&I department currently addresses this by integrating the content into the 400 methods block. An on-line elective course for undergraduate and graduate students is also offered. The effectiveness of this approach is being monitored while the program continues to explore new opportunities to address pre-service teachers’ needs in this area.

Finally, through engagement in interdisciplinary activities supporting the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) curriculum areas, the Unit will be moving toward systematic, institutionalized programs in the future. This work is has been initiated by the recent National Science Foundation Noyce Scholar Grant awarded to UM to recruit and educate up to
thirty individuals who will complete baccalaureate degrees in mathematics, chemistry, biology, geosciences, environmental science, computer science, or physics and earn secondary teacher licensure. Co-PI’s on this 5-year, $1.2M project are members of the PEU representing the College of Arts and Sciences and the Phyllis J. Washington College of Education and Human Sciences.

Advanced and Other School Programs

Throughout the Advanced and Other School Programs, faculty are enhancing the learning experience and achievement for candidates. In several programs, efforts are underway to improve the individual assessment systems to be more user-friendly and systematic. These changes are leading to the accessibility of more outcome indicators, in aggregate and disaggregate form, in a timely manner for faculty in the School Psychology program. School Psychology faculty are also discussing increasing their use of the data resulting from consumer satisfaction surveys filled out by past candidates and their employers.

The Master’s program in Curriculum and Instruction is being thoroughly examined to identify ways to make the degree more effective for graduate candidates and the K-12 students they teach. Given the criticism of general master’s degrees in education, we are committed to broadening the possibilities of areas to study while simultaneously pinpointing skills that research shows teachers in advanced program need. Faculty plan to increase international opportunities, prepare better applied researchers, and provide more opportunities for graduate candidates to demonstrate teaching effectiveness. Faculty have held multiple meetings with state officials to explore aligning the program to the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) and allow students to complete that exciting professional milestone as part of a master’s degree and implementation is targeted for Fall 2013.

Three recent changes have been implemented the M.Ed. program. First, candidates are required to take a course in educational research and a course in action research. By doing this, candidates are gaining a solid foundation in research, and that knowledge is being applied in the context of their classrooms to improve student achievement. Also, the M.Ed program is being offered in a hybrid format. More specifically, instead of having a designated online program, courses will be offered on a rotation that allows candidates to take courses in their preferred delivery mode. This allows candidates from across the globe to take part in our graduate program in our effort to increase diversity in our student population.

Finally, faculty are more clearly articulating program options for graduate students to allow them to obtain expertise in a particular area, in combination with the core, required courses. As mentioned, NBPTS will eventually be one of those options. Other areas of study include literacy, special education, technology, and library media. Faculty have also started exploring opportunities for international opportunities for graduate candidates. Initial ideas include semester or year-long exchanges in various exchange arrangements while completing online coursework and being mentored by faculty.

Educational Leadership (EDLD) faculty now are able to look at multiple levels of data on any given standard or program outcome. These data are playing a critical role in early stages of department conversations around the redesign of the curriculum for the M.Ed. in Educational Leadership as well as the principalship and superintendent Licensure/Endorsement Programs. At a more micro level, the EDLD Department is examining candidate performance data by demographic variables at the individual faculty level, as well as at the department level.

The M.A. English (Teaching) program has plans to seek common assessments, especially with thesis projects in the culminating professional paper. The program is also discussing the ability to collect more discriminating data on several key assessments.
Faculty in the Creative Pulse program will continue to exam specific components of this innovative integrated program to explore ways to improve. The program is also intensifying the feedback it is receiving from pre- and post-program surveys, as well as sending surveys to all teachers in Montana and throughout the Western U.S.

II. Unit Standards
Standard 2: Assessment System and Unit Evaluation

2.1 E-PAS provides the data for improving candidate performance, program quality, and Unit operations.

Given the nature of the Unit, which includes more than 40 programs across four Colleges/Schools, the PJWCoEHS and the Department of Curriculum and Instruction initiated a major effort to include all programs in an assessment system titled the Educator Preparation Assessment System (E-PAS). Through targeted investment, E-PAS has been developed to include all programs in systematic data collection, review, and action processes. The E-PAS table is inclusive of all programs and serves as a tracking and continuous improvement mechanism. This dynamic process is not only meant to be highly functional for accreditation reviewers, but it is also meant to be adaptable by key accreditation personnel and to provide current information to all parties involved in preparing educators. The E-PAS handbook contains a detailed description of the key elements.

E-PAS encompasses all programs within the PEU at The University of Montana. The Assessment Manager, in collaboration with the Executive Committee, coordinates the assessment process and the overall system. With E-PAS as a framework, data is centrally and systematically compiled, aggregated and disaggregated, summarized, shared, and discussed in specific Professional Education Council (PEC) meetings throughout the academic school year. This transparent sharing of data strengthens the entire Unit. Members of the PEC and guests attending meetings are able to see the various ways to collect, report, and use data to inform programmatic decisions for the improvement of candidate performance. As an example, reports from programs collecting more sophisticated data both in level (nominal, ordinal, interval, and ratio) and number of sources, provide concrete examples of the possibilities and uses of data to inform programmatic discussions and improve candidate performance. In addition, Action Activity Reports (AARs) from specific programs will inform the broader Unit discussions on the continuous improvement.

The Action Activity Report is one of the new, signature elements of the assessment system. In the fall of each academic year, each program will be given a report of all assessment data held in E-PAS. The reports will include: admission data, clinical data, key assessment data, completer data, and follow-up data from graduates and employers. Where possible, national and local comparator data will also be provided. Key faculty members from each program will be asked to meet with all involved parties of the respective programs and decide on action activities that will be undertaken during the current year. These action activities will be documented in Action Activity Reports (AARs), and will include criteria for determining success in meeting programmatic goals. The AARs will be presented to the Executive Committee at which time they will be reviewed and suggestions will be made back to key faculty. The current AARs will be located within the E-PAS table for review by interested parties.

The Unit is confident that this process will serve as a catalyst for transforming all of our programs as we tackle the challenges that lie ahead the 21st century.
Critical Transition Points

Within the assessment process, the individual progress of candidates in the programs is tracked and carefully monitored. Critical transition points focus around clinical experiences for candidates in licensure programs. In the licensure programs, candidates complete at least three clinical experiences. At the end of each of these clinical experiences, university faculty, cooperating teachers, and university supervisors evaluate candidates. In combination, these clinical experiences function as a key assessment. Individually, they are a logical way of monitoring the progress of each teaching candidate. Due to our close working relationships with schools, progress monitoring also takes place in more informal ways such as telephone and email. At the end of each clinical experience, evaluations are completed and submitted to the Director of Field Experiences. These evaluations are reviewed, and concerns are addressed with individual candidates. These data are then entered into the database to develop an overall clinical profile for each teacher candidate during the course of their program.

For non-licensure programs (advanced and SPAs), the transition points generally include admissions, coursework, comprehensive exams, and a capstone project. Examples of these capstone experiences include portfolios and professional projects. The varying nature of these products does not allow for common metrics, but each of the programs have developed unique ways to track candidate progress to determine appropriate progress through, and completion of respective programs.

An overall outcome of the systematic collection and reporting of data has helped to hold programs across the PEU accountable for the collection, analysis, and reporting of data at various times throughout the year. By strategically requiring when data are to be collected, analyzed, and reported by programs, the Unit’s assessment system and reporting requirements force programs to be actively engaged with the data through full faculty reviews in department/program meetings and college/school retreats.

Policies and procedures are in place within the University, the Professional Education Unit, and the PJWCoEHS to support effective responses to candidate complaints. In accordance with University policy, candidates are encouraged to discuss concerns first directly with the faculty or staff member. As part of such conversations, faculty, staff, and administrators advise candidates of program and University procedures and policies for addressing their concerns if desired. Admissions concerns are addressed in Department Handbooks for both initial and advanced candidates Complaints from candidates about issues relevant to the program of study are frequently addressed through advising, the course evaluation process, and/or petitions or appeals.

2.2.b Continuous Improvement: Summary of data-based activities and changes

In the spirit of continuous improvement and in preparation for the joint Montana NCATE/CAEP review of programs within the PEU, programs have re-examined their individual assessment systems and practices. Through informal and formal meetings, seminars, and work groups, programs continue to wrestle with improving the levels of data and streamlining the collection, disaggregation and analysis of data, as well as ensuring action is taken based on data. We value steps the PEU has taken to work collaboratively and effectively as a Unit. This work is supported by a strong PEU governance structure and has allowed us to make improvements and to increase the focus on demonstrating effectiveness. We continue to seek ways to increase faculty involvement in clinical experiences—especially in advanced programs. However, as reported in Standard 1, for our licensure programs, we have embraced most of the suggestions made by the
NCATE Blue Ribbon Panel and are enthusiastic about the linkage between our innovative programs and our strong assessment system (See Exhibit 3.a Blue Ribbon Design Principles)

As addressed in Standard 1, many changes have been made within the licensure programs. The changes have been made based on feedback from candidates and employers and by examining clinical experiences data. With the advanced, master’s program in Curriculum and Instruction there have been efforts undertaken to clarify program outcomes and to better document the candidates’ attainment of competencies. These decisions have also been made based on feedback from candidates and employer, as well as attention to developments nationally in advanced teacher education programs. We continue to seek ways to increase faculty engagement in clinical experiences and to clearly demonstrate teaching effectiveness. However, as addressed in Standard 1, we have charted a course for making these improvements.

Additionally, the School Psychology program has started a system whereby an office clerical position helps with data entry for future reporting purposes. This aids in aggregation and analysis of cohort trends and examining averages across candidates, instead of candidates in isolation, which is primarily the focus of previous discussions.

Finally, the Educational Leadership program developed its own integrated database through a macro-driven excel workbook that accepts data directly from a common assessment rubric identified by the student’s UM identification number. This allows the department to aggregate and disaggregate the data from any number of demographic indicators linked to specific key assessments, standards, Conceptual Framework components, and professional behaviors. Data can be disaggregated by student, gender, race/ethnicity, course, semester, key assessment (including specific rubric criteria), Montana Standards, PEU Conceptual Framework, Professional Behaviors or any combination thereof.

2.2.b Continuous Improvement: Plans for sustaining and enhancing performance

In recent years, the PEU has made significant progress in improving the quality of data collected, how those data are collected, how they are used, and how continuous improvement is driven by data. We realize, like many professional education programs, that further steps are needed to improve our overall process at the micro and macro levels. By embracing a culture of continuous improvement, we are in the middle of a major transformation.

Improvement on the validity and reliability of assessments

- Use of standardized assessments (PRAXIS)
  - Currently, our elementary candidates take the PRAXIS II Content Examination to meet licensure requirements. Beginning in the Fall of 2013, our secondary program candidates will also complete PRAXIS Content exams. These assessments are widely used in teacher education programs and, according to Educational Testing Service, they are valid and reliable instruments. Additionally, the School Psychology program utilizes Educational Testing Service for the NCSP exams.

- Training of supervisors and cooperating teachers
  - The Office of Field Experiences offers extensive training to university supervisors and cooperating teachers in an effort to insure validity and reliability with our multiple field observations. Orientations are conducted every semester, and steps have been taken to make the criteria clearer to these professionals.

- Collaboration in the development and constant review of rubrics
  - Since the last review, faculty have worked to create common rubrics for course-based assessments. The Unit has had success in this area but there are challenges. In Curriculum
and Instruction, rubrics have been successfully implemented in the Exceptionalities and Classroom Management and Technology in Education courses, and a common assessment is used in the Ethics course. Although under continued refinement, we believe these assessments accurately depict candidates’ knowledge and skills. As part of our overall continuous improvement plan, we are developing more course-based assessments.

- Within the non-licensure graduate program, some course-based rubrics have been developed and successfully implemented. Even with the challenges of multiple faculty members using a common rubric, the constant refinement of these instruments is an appropriate professional practice for establishing the reliability and validity of these instruments.

- Committees review portfolios, comprehensive exams and other key assessments
  - Currently, all candidates in the initial licensure programs complete a portfolio. Because a process has been initiated to identify more valid and reliable ways to assess teaching effectiveness, the portfolio has not been included as a key assessment. That said, faculty review of the portfolios provides critical information regarding student progress and program review. The portfolio rubric undergoes constant refinement, and we are currently in the process of implementing a digital portfolio. The digital portfolio will be used to assess our candidates’ overall impact on student learning. Faculty will review the digital portfolio in 3-member committees in order to ensure consistency in how portfolios are reviewed and scored.
  - In advanced programs, similar committees review portfolios and comprehensive exams. In the C&I advanced program, a rubric for comprehensive exams that are scored by a three-person committee. This rubric has improved the consistency in how candidates are scored and has helped pinpoint graduate students’ strengths and weaknesses relative to program competencies. Other advanced programs, including Education Leadership, utilize faculty and practitioners to score portfolios.

In sum, our programs are assessed with multiple indicators spanning commercial testing services to in-house projects and assignments. The assessments are field-based where possible and clearly provide faculty with critical information about our candidates.

**Short-term improvements**

- A focus on the quality of the data collected has resulted in the use of rubrics across multiple sections for course in Technology, Classroom Management, and Ethics. Overall, data for these courses have been compiled for about 75% of the candidates. In the next year, that number will is projected to increase to 100%. This improvement will continue to help link candidate outcomes to coursework, monitor individual candidate progress, and provide more meaningful and consistent data for programmatic decision-making.

- A series of teacher effectiveness pilot projects have been launched over the past two years. The major focus of each of these pilots was to have teacher candidates, while in various clinical settings, conduct a basic study to determine the effectiveness of their teaching. While we conducted pilots in some secondary licensure programs, our main thrust thus far has been in our elementary mathematics methods course. This has been a successful pilot project with the most interesting finding being a correlation between the amount of time a candidate has spent in the classroom and the effect on student performance.

- Next, a series of studies is planned that will allow further refinement of the assessment system and make better decisions about which assessments should be replaced or retained. Examples include studies that examine the relationship between the Classroom Management Key
Assessment and scores on the evaluation from the three clinical experiences (Are there significant differences in candidate scores on classroom management before and after they take a course on classroom management?). Another study that will be conducted is an investigation of Technology Key Assessment and how that assessment relates to clinical evaluations specific to instructional and behavior management (Do candidates who have high scores on using technology in the classroom do better at managing instructional and behavioral environments?). These applied research projects—conducted by program faculty—will help determine validity and reliability and generate continuous improvement.

- Finally, in concert with major changes in the licensure programs (see Standard 1), the Unit is increasing the focus on and integration of assessment across courses. In addition, a capstone experience completed during student teaching will be implemented. This capstone project (with a working title of “Candidate Impact Documentary”) will have foci on research, assessment, technology, classroom management and teacher effectiveness. It will have some component of a Teacher Work Sample and the Teacher Performance Assessment. The element that makes this capstone outstanding is the additional experience of developing a video production that will serve as the final product for the candidate’s respective program. A key feature of this capstone will be to highlight teaching effectiveness. It will also serve as a step toward candidates’ developing teaching skills in virtual environments (prototypes will be available during the team visit). Most importantly, it will provide program faculty with a product that can be used to determine the impact of our programs with a final evaluation of candidates’ teaching knowledge, skills, and dispositions.

Long-term improvements

- Integration with the university data systems is a priority.
  - These improvements will streamline some of our processes and save resources by reducing duplications in reporting. Examples include the capability of seamlessly pulling in candidate pre-education data into the E-PAS system, and being able to depend on others on campus to conduct follow-up studies. The University of Montana recently hired a new Associate Vice President for the Office of University Planning, Budgeting & Analysis and members of the PEC Assessment Standing Committee have scheduled the first of a series of meetings beginning in November.
  - Previously, the PEU investigated commercial providers for a data system. For a short time, Chalk and Wire was piloted with other units on campus. Ultimately, Chalk and Wire was not selected for two major reasons. First, significant redundancy with UM’s learning management system (LMS) was highlighted during the pilot period with Chalk and Wire. In addition, during this same period, the university transitioned the campus learning management system from Blackboard to Moodle, further complicating these efforts. Finally, we made a decision that we should improve our assessment system’s foundations through our own efforts and organization, rather than complying with the demands of a commercial product. While the E-PAS system has helped us achieve our goals, we continue to explore various commercial and other data systems to find ones that best meet our needs.

- Across Advanced and Other School Professional Programs, we are seeking solutions to streamline the manner in which programmatic data are collected. Discussions vary from program to program based upon the program’s specific need and the maturity of their assessment system. A new Assessment Manager position provides specific guidance and oversight as well as coordination of assessment activities. In addition, the Faculty Qualifications, Performance, and Development (FQPD) committee will be discussing
professional development opportunities for all PEU faculty regarding assessment issues. Potential topics include seminars on general topics such as program assessment systems; development and use of assessment rubrics; issues involving fairness, accuracy of data; reliability and validity of assessment instruments; and the interpretation of educational data. It is also planned to enlarge the professional development opportunities associated with assessment beyond the PEU to a broader audience across the campus, including partners in the field. It is hoped that this expansion of participants will assist in the ongoing assessment evolution within the PEU. Anecdotal feedback from employers has indicated that they feel bombarded with various employee surveys regarding initial, advanced, and other school professionals working in their schools. In the upcoming year efforts will be made to consolidate these surveys and coordinate the timing of their dissemination to employers.

II. Unit Standards

Standard 3: Field Experience and Clinical Practice

3.1 The University of Montana PEU works with school partners to deliver field experiences and clinical practices that enable candidates to develop the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions to help all students learn.

The Unit, its school partners, and other members of the professional community work together to design, deliver, and evaluate field components to best prepare future and current teachers as well as other school professionals. The Unit’s Conceptual Framework serves as the driving force when designing the field component of the initial, advanced, and other school professional programs. Field experiences and clinical practice at the initial level prepare candidates to meet the challenges of the classroom by providing involvement with diverse groups of students, whereby candidates integrate knowledge, skills, and dispositions in a variety of settings with students and adults; candidates collaborate with teachers, university supervisors, and other interns about their practice; and candidates are involved in a variety of school-based activities in which diversity is embraced and the input of all voices respected. Field experiences are systematic opportunities for candidates to observe in schools and other agencies, tutor students, participate in education-related community events, interact with families of students, attend school board meetings, and assist teachers or other school professionals prior to concluding their program.

As reported by the NCATE Blue Ribbon Panel, it is imperative for teacher education programs to connect content of courses with the challenges in the classroom. The Unit has established practices and policies in order to implement a strong field component to enable these connections in the initial, advanced, and other school professional programs. Coursework and field experiences at the initial level are grouped into blocks to scaffold development. In the advanced teaching programs, field experiences are embedded within specific courses. Educational Leadership and School Psychology programs require field experiences which are not embedded in a particular course. These formats instead require candidates to connect course content with the time spent in the P-12 environment.

Field experiences in the initial program generally take place in classrooms, with some in academic after-school programs such as Flagship. All pre-service teachers complete a minimum of two field experiences prior to student teaching. The initial experience is the 45-hour EDU 202 Early Field Experience. The second experience is fulfilled in conjunction with content area methods courses: EDU 491 Classroom Management/Field Experience for elementary candidates.
(5-week immersion) and EDU 395 Field Experience for secondary candidates. Elementary candidates have an additional 45-hour field experience (EDU 395 Field Experience PK-8) in conjunction with the language arts curriculum block. Student teaching for all licensure candidates is a full semester, 16-week experience (approximately 640 hours).

For the advanced teaching programs, field experiences take place within the candidate’s own classroom. The Educational Leadership program has three types of field-based experiences. The first is what all candidates in the M.Ed. or Licensure/Endorsement programs are required to participate in and is referred to as the Field Experiences component of the program. For this field experience requirement, candidates in Educational Leadership conduct their field experience at a school of their choosing. These candidates are encouraged to complete a portion of the field experience in a grade level other than their current teaching assignment. The second field-based experience is referred to as the Board of Public Education (BPE) Administrative Internship. This internship allows the candidate to act as the administrator of record for the particular school. The third field-based experience is the Field Based Administrative Internship. This internship allows candidates to earn college credit for specialized internship experiences. Candidates in School Psychology are placed into a practicum and internships (School Psychology Student Handbook PDF Attachment) throughout their program of study. The practica are focused experiences during the candidate’s first two years of courses. In their third year, candidates experience an extensive year-long internship.

The Unit recognizes that cooperating teachers and supervisors play an important part in the program delivery; therefore criteria for selection of clinical faculty have been established to assure quality mentorship in all programs within the PEU. Educational Leadership field experience mentors are Montana Licensed administrators for the area of field experience. School Psychology onsite supervisors must currently work as a School Psychologist, be currently licensed as one, and have been licensed for at least three years prior to taking on a supervisee. Educators interested in serving as cooperating teachers for introductory initial licensure field experiences must currently teach in the same area of specialization as the teacher candidate and have the approval of the school administrator(s) and the Director of Field Experiences. Recruitment letters and qualification documents specify minimum criteria for educators interested in serving as cooperating teachers during clinical practice. Educators interested in serving as cooperating teachers during clinical practice must meet specific requirements as a way to assure quality mentorship. These requirements include a current teaching license in the area of specialization and at the level of teaching, have at least three years - preferably, five years - of successful teaching experience, currently teach in the same area of specialization as the teacher candidate, and have the approval of the school administrator(s) and the Director of Field Experiences. All Cooperating Teachers meet or exceed these requirements (see Exhibit 3.c Clinical Practice Placement Charts).

A university supervisor is secured to work with each candidate during clinical practice. Three categories comprise the pool of supervisors. The first is Contracted, the group that comprises the majority of the supervisors. At a minimum, these classroom teachers and school administrators must be either currently licensed or recently retired and have a minimum of five years of successful teaching. The second group is University faculty assigned to supervise candidates in their areas of expertise when teaching loads allow. The third group is qualified graduate assistants who are assigned when their expertise matches need and their teaching schedules allow. University supervisors complete six observations per candidate throughout the semester and are continually available for advice, intervention, or other support as needed. The Unit relies heavily on partners to successfully prepare future teachers. As such, it is the Unit’s goal to provide clinical faculty with a sound understanding of the program as well as with the resources needed to
successfully perform their roles. With this in mind, training sessions are offered each semester to provide an overview of the program mission and goals, candidate expectations, assessment procedures, and recommendations for working with candidates. Training videos are available for those unable to attend.

The Admission Committee ensures candidates meet entry criteria while the Office of Field Experiences and Licensure Office review candidate progress toward exit criteria for clinical practice. Assessment parameters for candidates participating in field and clinical experiences are articulated in course syllabi. For field and clinical experiences, administrative mentors, school psychology supervisors, cooperating teachers, and university supervisors assess candidate progress via a multitude of tools: formal and informal observations and conferences; written feedback; journal entries; and formal evaluations.

Formal evaluations are essential elements of all levels of field experiences within the PEU. For initial licensure: 1) Cooperating teacher and candidates (and the university supervisor if a clinical experience) complete the Midterm Assessment halfway through the placement and use that as an impetus to discuss performance, progress, and goals for the remainder of the placement; 2) Final Assessment follows the same format. The clinical experience also incorporates a Summative Assessment whereby three letter grades are assigned. All forms are based on the nine established Performance Outcomes and include both numeric scores and written feedback. Assessment tools are located in the field packets and handbooks used by candidates, school-based faculty, and university supervisors, contents of which have been collaboratively designed and revised in response to assessed performance on the program outcomes. Candidates in the initial program maintain a Professional Development Portfolio beginning with their first field experience and continuing through the capstone clinical experience. The portfolio is comprised of 16 artifacts identified by faculty to best identify growth. Portfolio contents are assessed by the candidate’s academic advisor.

Assessments in School Psychology and Educational Leadership for field-based experiences include self-evaluations, supervisor evaluations, and consumer evaluations. Detailed performance results are presented in Standards 1 and 2. Opportunities for candidates to provide evaluative feedback regarding the support and guidance received from cooperating teachers, university supervisors, Unit faculty and staff, and coursework exist throughout the program. Candidate feedback culminates in a comprehensive survey. The Unit reviews these survey results and uses the collected data to gauge need for change with curriculum, assessment, placement practices, and/or policy.

It is a practice of the Unit for field placements to be jointly determined with educational partners. Each semester, the Unit’s Office of Field Experiences (OFE) collects data pertaining to candidates: placement preferences; subject area; licensure requirements; and other descriptors via course enrollments; and, in the case of student teaching, individual interviews with the Director of Field Experiences. OFE staff corresponds with school administrators in-person or through email/phone to discuss placement needs. School administrators determine eligibility of faculty to serve as cooperating teachers (mentoring attributes and experience) and then share the data with those eligible to ascertain interest among faculty. The Montana Board of Public Instruction Administrative Internship is a partnership between the intern, participating school district, and the Department of Educational Leadership and the Montana Board of Public Education. This partnership allows the candidate to act as the school administrator for the internship experience. School Psychology faculty works with campus partners and schools districts to offer comprehensive field experiences and internships. When appropriate, formal memoranda of agreement are made with sites where candidates are placed.
The Unit works to offer opportunities for faculty and P-12 community members to share expertise to support initial licensure candidates’ learning in field experiences and clinical practice. One way this is addressed is in the intentional presence of PJWCoEHS faculty in the schools. Candidates enrolled in EDU 202 Exploring Teaching through Field Experiences during Wintersession, are placed in a two-week immersed field experience. Candidates enrolled in Block III of the Elementary Education program experience a 5-week immersion. These immersions afford candidates full-day, consecutive-day experiences. Participating schools provide on-site locations for candidates to meet with the course instructor to reflect upon, and discuss their activities and observations. School administrators and cooperating teachers are invited to attend. PEU faculty also share expertise through campus events such as Professional Education Committee meetings, Teaching Tools for the College Classroom (T²C²) (formerly known as “Lunch Bytes”) and panel discussions at Seminars. Unit members regularly join colleagues from other Montana universities to provide presentations at the Montana Institutes of Higher Education Consortium conferences, the state annual Educator Forum, and the Montana Office of Public Instruction’s Mentor Institute. These partnering endeavors strive to share expertise, further efforts with using the Co-Teaching Model to integrate candidates into classrooms, and provide support for new teachers.

Maintaining strategic partnerships that will positively impact both candidate and student learning is a key factor in successful candidate preparation. All partners must be acknowledged as stakeholders. If this mission is not kept at the forefront, fewer high quality clinical experience sites will result. The Unit’s field placement numbers for initial field experiences are used as indicators toward achievement in this area; the Unit places approximately 753 candidates in school classrooms annually (538 for field experiences and 216 for student teaching clinical practice). During 2011-2012, 511 candidates were placed in 42 local schools for their introductory field experiences. Additionally, 246 candidates were placed in 224 local schools, 45 in Montana schools, 20 out-of-state schools, and 11 in international settings for clinical practice. (Note: 246 candidates equated to 300 placements due to multiple placement needs: K-12, double majors and major/minors.) The combined 60 field placements secured by programs for other school professionals in 2011-12 also indicate strong partnerships. Policies for placement, supervision, assessment and removal of candidates from field placements are included in field packets and handbooks. If an educational partner is concerned regarding the behavior of a candidate, a Professional Behavior Form may be generated which may result in a Professional Growth Plan (PGP) for the candidate. A PGP will summarize strengths, list concerns regarding current performance, and outline the expectations and standards to be met based on the Unit’s nine performance outcomes.

3.2.b Continuous Improvement: Summary of data-based activities and changes

The Unit continually strives to create collaborative partnerships that focus on clinical experiences at the core. As pointed out by the NCATE Blue Ribbon panel, there is a call for more clinical experience to help teacher candidates become better prepared. Based on these findings and coupled with input received from school partners and members of the professional community, the Unit has adopted two models comprised of more intensive and extensive time in the field. The format of the Elementary Education 400 Block Model has been changed to frontload methods courses for the first 10 weeks of the semester, immediately followed by a 5-week immersion field experience. In academic year 2011-12, a Professional Development School Model was piloted at DeSmet Elementary. Preliminary results indicate that the depth of this partnership provided
professional growth not only for candidates but also for in-service teachers. The model was designed to include professional development to share information, knowledge, and classroom practices. Candidates are involved in action research: taking notes, recording progress, and making accommodations for learners.

Based on research from St. Cloud State University Teacher Quality Enhancement Center indicating marked increases in reading and math proficiencies, the Unit adopted the Co-Teaching Model for integrating candidates into classrooms. Candidates receive information and practice with the seven strategies during coursework while a training session is offered each semester for cooperating teachers and university supervisors for which professional development credits are offered.

As a way to address the findings of the NCATE Blue Ribbon Panel report indicating that many graduates do not feel well prepared to meet the challenges of the classroom as well to seek input from candidates, the Unit hosts four seminars during the clinical experience. Topics have changed accordingly, to provide additional classroom management resources and strategies, and further practice with co-teaching strategies.

In Educational Leadership, field experience for the candidate has changed from being embedded in each required course to being an expectation in addition to the courses. Originally, field experience requirements were not consistent across the program as each faculty member had individual field experience expectations. The only consistency across the program was the number of required field experience hours per course. This inconsistency of field experience expectations was troubling for candidates as reported in advising meetings and post program feedback. Therefore, the program revised the field experience requirements in the autumn of 2011. Now, the Educational Leadership field experience is a requirement of the program for the candidates rather than being tied to a specific course. The new field experience requirements are aligned to the Montana PEPP Standards for School Principals, Superintendents, Supervisors and Curriculum Directors. Each standard has a minimum number of field experience hours that the candidate must participate in. In addition, within each standard, there are specific activities that are required of all candidates.

3.2.b Continuous Improvement: Plans for sustaining and enhancing performance

The Unit plans to enhance performance by offering numerous and diverse field experiences. Currently, even though Montana is a rural state with an ~88% white populace, the Unit works to identify field experiences in large/small school districts, schools with high poverty rates, large percentages of American Indian students, and large numbers of students with special needs. Because there are seven Indian reservations and 11 tribes in the state, partnerships with schools on or near reservations have afforded candidates the opportunity to experience a community with ethnic and cultural diversity. Beginning in 2012-13, the Unit will also provide candidates experiences with inner city populations via online interchanges with a faculty member based in Seattle. Additionally, efforts to establish placement partnerships at out-of-state and global sites will increase. The Unit will begin sending candidates to Lake and Peninsula School District in Alaska, Gaiyang Elementary School in China, and Kodaikanal International School in India in 2012-13. Sustained efforts will provide experiences with diverse ethnic/racial, linguistic, gender, and socioeconomic groups in countries such as Kenya, Costa Rica, Australia, New Zealand, and Spain. Application materials, policies, and assessment tools are located in newly-developed international handbook’s contents, which have been collaboratively designed and revised in response to assessed performance on the program outcomes.
The Unit plans to provide candidates additional familiarity with diverse populations via virtually immersive field experiences. Through partnerships established with such varying sites as urban schools in Seattle and remote villages in Alaska, candidates will have opportunities to observe a classroom in action, interact with the classroom teacher afterwards, and debrief with Unit instructors. As is the case with field and clinical experiences, virtual experiences will be tracked through a centralized database, thereby assuring systematic, purposeful placements of candidates.

Additional training videos will be created during the 2012-2013. Feedback from clinical faculty indicated a need for shorter, more topic-specific segments. The Office of Field Experience produced and disseminated a pilot version to address Midterm Assessment procedures. Response from clinical faculty has been positive; therefore, a similar format will be used to develop additional segments for the Final Assessment, co-teaching strategies, and the importance of strong communication skills. These additions will support continuous improvement efforts toward consistency and reliability.

The School Psychology program is looking at ways to enhance feedback from the employer and consumer of school psychology services to better address professional work characteristics of the candidates. Recently (winter of 2012), the program was able to secure grant monies to help in remuneration of onsite supervisor work. This is expected to be funded into the foreseeable future.

Advanced Teaching programs are exploring ways to incorporate candidate assignments that are field based and utilize more detailed analytical assessment rubrics. In addition, procedures are being discussed to regularly collect these data in the Advanced Teaching programs.

The Educational Leadership program is considering inviting employers of past candidates as well as past candidates currently employed in school leadership positions to campus for a focus group session looking at improving the field experience component for future candidates. Faculty in Educational Leadership are considering moving from suggesting to requiring a certain percentage of the field experience be conducted at a level different than the candidate’s current teaching assignment.

II. Unit Standards

Standard 4: Diversity

4.1 The PEU prepares candidates to work with all students, including individuals of different ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, gender, exceptionalities, language, religion, sexual orientation, and/or geographic area.

The unit prepares candidates to work with all students, including individuals of different ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, gender, exceptionalities, language, religion, sexual orientation, and/or geographic area. The commitment of the Professional Education Unit (PEU) to embrace diversity has its foundation in the Montana State Constitution, is further highlighted with the Montana University Systems mandate on minority and American Indian education, and continues through The University of Montana’s mission, vision, and commitment to diversity in all facets of the University.

The state of Montana has recognized its unique challenges as well as opportunities when preparing candidates to work with diverse populations. This emphasis begins with a focus in the Montana state Constitution. Article X of the Montana Constitution states: “The state recognizes the distinct and unique cultural heritage of the American Indians and is committed in its educational goals to the preservation of their cultural integrity.” The Montana Supreme Court ruling in a
recent lawsuit dealing with adequate funding for schools (*Columbia Falls School District v. State of Montana*) included a mandate to uphold the constitution and provide all students in the state with instruction in the culture and heritage of the Indian tribes within the state. This ruling led to an increased focus on what has become known as Indian Education for All (IEFA). It has also opened up opportunities and resources for teacher candidates to study the culture and heritage of the tribes by engaging with tribal members both on and off campus.

The **University of Montana's core values** address internationalism, diversity, and community among students, faculty, and staff. Supported by these core values, the UM Mission Statement notes: “The University also educates competent and humane professionals and informed, ethical, and engaged citizens of local and global communities; and provides basic and applied research, technology transfer, cultural outreach, and service benefiting the local community, region, State, nation, and world.” The Vision Statement for UM also includes explicit core values addressing diversity; “Intrinsic to this mission are the underlying values of leadership, engagement, diversity and sustainability. These essential values underpin our preparation of graduates and our contributions to society in the 21st century through high-impact teaching, research, creative scholarship and service.” The University declares in its **Aspirations for Academic Affairs** that it will “lead the diversification of Montana by creating a model of campus diversity.”

Not only is **Diversity** an essential component of the foundational belief system at UM, but the University provides organizational structures, policies, and practices to support diversity in the areas of **Disability, Nationality, Race/Ethnicity, Religion, Sexual Orientation, Veterans Affairs, and Women/Gender** issues. In its effort to enhance diversity, UM recognizes that particular focused efforts must be placed on including members of groups who have historically been subject to discrimination and are still underrepresented in the campus community. Supporting this foundational belief, the University has incorporated three strategic choices in its **Diversity Plan** and regularly reports progress on these three strategic choices to stakeholders: **Strategic Choice 1:** Enhance the campus culture of understanding, respect, support, and advancement of diversity; **Strategic Choice 2:** Create avenues for access to the academy and for success within the academy for all individuals, and particularly populations historically underrepresented in the academy; and **Strategic Choice 3:** Educate and prepare students to contribute and thrive in a multicultural society. Diversity also has been highlighted in the University’s Academic Strategic Plan and is a central feature as one of six Strategic Initiatives in the **Academic Strategic Plan** for UM. Initiative five of the Academic Strategic Plan is to “Embrace Diversity and Global Participation” and is supported by the four goals of: (a) Respect, welcome, encourage, and celebrate diversity, (b) Ensure access for American Indians and foster the preservation of their culture, (c) Correct inequities that exist due to historical exclusion of underrepresented populations, an (d) Enhance international learning and research opportunities for all. The importance of diversity and all that it encompasses goes beyond espoused values and beliefs at UM. On way that these values and beliefs are operationalized is through the hiring process for new faculty.

Every effort is made in the hiring process to recruit applicants from traditionally underrepresented groups. As part of its operating principles toward achieving its mission and vision of diversity, the University requires a national search for all positions. One important component of this mandate is to increase the diversity among its faculty. To this end, recruitment position announcements must be emailed to Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU’s) and institutions with significant Hispanic graduates, Tribal Colleges, and the Montana State Job Service. As a **Statement of Policy**, The University of Montana provides to all people the equal opportunity for education, employment, and participation in University activities without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, creed, service, in the uniformed services (as defined in state
and federal law), veteran status, sex, age, political ideas, marital or family status, physical or mental disability, or sexual orientation. Embracing these requirements and efforts, this year the Department of Curriculum and Instruction took a step forward by successfully recruiting and hiring a tenure-track faculty who fits the definition of an under-represented population.

Under-represented student populations also are supported at UM. Recently the Payne Family Native American Center opened its new facility in a position of prominence on the UM oval. This facility serves as a resource for Native and Non-native students. It also houses the Native American Studies program which is a valuable source for understanding the history and beliefs of the tribes. As a symbol of goodwill and unity, the Native American Center will bring together Native American's and non-Native Americans and understanding between cultures. American Indian Student Services is a resource dedicated to Native American enrollment, achievement and success at The University of Montana. The University of Montana Partnership for Comprehensive Equity (PACE) works to increase the representation and advancement of women in academic science and engineering careers. Project PACE is founded in an alliance of administrators, deans, department heads, and faculty who share concern about gender-based inequity and recognize the need for change. The International Programs at UM enhances the mission and vision for diversity and global citizenship by providing support for UM students studying abroad as well as for international students studying at UM. Also supporting the University’s diversity goals is the Diversity Advisory Council which has the charge to “To encourage, advocate, and facilitate communication, education, and relations among persons of various races, physical conditions, religions, national origins, citizenship, genders, ages, socio-economic backgrounds, and sexual orientation at The University of Montana.” Five of the six (83%) faculty representatives on the Diversity Advisory Council are members of the PEU. The PEU aligns its shared vision with the espoused values, principles, and foci on issues of diversity established by the state of Montana, the Montana University System, and The University of Montana through PEU’s Conceptual Framework.

The Conceptual Framework for the PEU has a strong foundation in the university’s mission, vision, policies, and practices. One of the foundations of the PEU’s Conceptual Framework includes “Respect for Diversity and Individual Worth” highlighting the ethics of care and mutual respect. The Conceptual Framework is manifested throughout programs within the PEU in courses, assignments, learning activities, and field experiences. As an important component of the Unit’s Conceptual Framework, Respect for Diversity and Individual Worth is one part of every program’s key assessment. As such, candidates are expected to develop an understanding of, and professional attitude toward, diversity during their professional programs.

Indian Education for All permeates the curriculum of the Professional Education Unit (PEU). Being constitutionally mandated and under implemented for decades, the PEU has embraced the opportunities connected to IEFA and expanded the curriculum across initial and advanced programs to include appropriate experiences for all candidates. These efforts are also supported and required by the Montana Board of Public Instruction through the Montana Professional Educator Preparation Program Standards (PEPPS). Within the PEPP Standards are two major standards that specifically address diversity (10.58.307) and the history, culture and contemporary status of American Indians and tribes in Montana (10.58.501). These standards further prescribe that candidates need to demonstrate knowledge of how students within different populations, including Montana American Indians, differ in their approaches to learning and create instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse learners. All programs in the PEU successfully address both of these state standards.
Each initial and advanced program also addresses the contextual issues of diversity through their specific discipline of study. As a result, courses and learning activities in the PEU are designed to assist candidates in developing a classroom and school climate that values diversity. These competencies related to diversity are assessed in key program and unit assessments. For example, in the initial licensure program several courses have been developed to address diversity and Montana’s mandate to provide Indian Education for All. One course in the Curriculum & Instruction program specifically addresses strategies for candidates to implement IEFA in the classroom. In another example, in a collaborative effort between Curriculum & Instruction and Native American Studies, a course called Indigenous Ways of Knowing was designed and offered. Methods courses in math, social studies, and reading provide specific content and activities that incorporate principles of IEFA. The Curriculum & Instruction program integrates IEFA into the 400 methods block using the Essential Understandings that were developed in collaboration with the Office of Public Instruction and the Montana Indian Tribes. In addition, advanced programs address IEFA in the context of their curriculum. Programs in School Psychology and Educational Leadership use multiple measures to assess diversity in their respective programs and assessment data has yielded notable candidate achievement scores.

Diversity, as viewed by the University and the PEU is broader than just IEFA. While IEFA is a recent addition to the educational stage in Montana, the issues surrounding diversity as a whole provide challenges. Even though Montana is a large state with a small population representing significantly less diversity than the United States, candidates experience diversity from a more expanded perspective including schools of poverty. Currently, 78% of candidates in field experiences are placed in schools with 20% - 60% poverty levels. An additional 14% of the candidates are placed in school with 60% to 80% poverty. Teaching methods courses in the English department address multicultural perspectives, and issues of social justice, diversity, equity, and fairness. These values are articulated in reflective papers, a variety of formative assessments, and in the final synthesis paper for the program. The Department of Curriculum and Instruction has developed the course, Education Across Cultures which devotes the entire course to understanding individual differences in student learners, and how to best work with, and advocate for diverse learners. A key assessment in this course focuses on multicultural education and has shown impressive candidate achievement.

Curriculum, field experiences, and clinical practice promote candidate’s development of knowledge, skills, and professional behaviors related to diversity identified in the unit’s conceptual framework. Each program in the Professional Education Unit addresses diversity in the preparation and placement of students in the field. The Field Experience Office strives to place students in diverse settings. Currently, even though Montana is a rural state with an ~88% white populate, the unit works to identify field experiences in large/small school districts, schools with high poverty rates, large percentages of American Indian students, and large numbers of students with special needs. Because there are seven Indian reservations and 11 tribes in the state, partnerships with schools on or near reservations have afforded candidates the opportunity to experience a community with ethnic and cultural diversity. The School Psychology program carefully considers how candidates can be given a variety of practicum experiences that exposes these candidates to students who are diverse along a number of dimensions. Examples of diverse practicum placements are Arlee School District with 63% Native American population and 77% poverty level, Lowell Elementary School with 73% Poverty, and St. Ignatius School District with 60% Native American population and 79% poverty level. Candidates in the PEU also are expected to demonstrate classroom behaviors that are consistent with the ideas of fairness and the belief that all students can learn. As espoused and assessed professional behaviors in key
programmatic assessments, candidates in all programs are confronted with these two fundamental beliefs that support the construct of diversity.

4.2.b Continuous Improvement: Summary of data-based activities and changes

To better understand how candidates are embracing the elements and professional behaviors of diversity, programs across the PEU have embarked on exploring ways to better assess the various diversity components. These focused efforts have led to enhanced assessments in some programs that examine candidate competencies in diversity from multiple assessments, providing multiple indicators to inform not only the candidate but the program. From these data sets, programs are making data informed decisions in areas ranging from curricula revisions to field experiences. One specific change occurred in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction with the development of a required course in exceptionality and classroom management which also contains a key assessment for the initial program. School Psychology is working to refine and focus where in their program to assess the candidates’ abilities and beliefs regarding diversity issues. These faculty members have made great strides in identifying where issues of diversity were taught and assessed; identifying no less than 11 courses that require candidates to interact with issues of diversity. The Department of Educational Leadership has created an intricate assessment system that breaks down all assessment data from all formative and summative assessments into specific components based on the Montana PEPP Standards and the Unit’s Conceptual Framework. This system was developed in response to the need to more directly assess candidate skills, abilities, and professional behaviors as they relate to the Montana PEPP standards. In this process, careful consideration was given to issues of diversity. To assess candidate’s dispositions toward issues of diversity, Educational Leadership examines date from six different components in five different courses along with one component in the culminating presentation. In addition, data from the Educational Leadership Program are disaggregated by gender, ethnicity, and English as a First Language (EFL).
Field placements have also changed in an attempt to provide candidates with a more varied placement regarding students. The Unit plans to provide initial candidates additional familiarity with diverse populations via virtually immersive field experiences. Beginning in 2012/13, the unit will provide candidates numerous opportunities for experiences with inner city populations via online interchanges with a faculty member based in Seattle. Through partnerships established with urban schools in Seattle and villages in Alaska, candidates will have opportunities to observe a classroom in action, interact with the classroom teacher afterwards, and debrief with unit instructors. As is the case with field and clinical experiences, virtual experiences will be tracked through a centralized database thereby assuring systematic, purposeful placements of candidates. Additionally, efforts to establish placement partnerships at out-of-state and global sites will increase. The unit will begin sending candidates to Lake and Peninsula School District in Alaska, Gaiyang Elementary School in China, and Kodaikanal International School in India for the 2012–2013 school year. Sustained efforts will provide experiences with diverse ethnic/racial, linguistic, gender, and socioeconomic groups in countries such as Kenya, Costa Rica, Australia, New Zealand, and Spain. Application materials, policies, and assessment tools are located in the newly-developed international handbooks which have been collaboratively designed and revised in response to assessed performances on the program outcomes.

Changes have also occurred in programs to address cultural issues surrounding admissions criteria and exit exams. For example, in the advanced program in Curriculum and Instruction, changes in the admissions criteria have occurred. There are now alternatives to taking the Graduate Records Exam (GRE) which has been shown to have cultural bias. The final exam for the M.Ed. in Educational Leadership has changed from a sit down and write for eight hours event, which severely handicapped students who’s first language was not English, to a more realistic job embedded presentation and discussion on a school issue requiring a leadership action.

4.2.b Discuss plans for sustaining and enhancing performance through continuous improvement as articulated in unit Standard 4.

The PEU is moving forward actively pursuing continuous improvement in the area of diversity through the exploration of valid assessment instruments and progressive standards that will apply to all graduates. With a focus on assessment, the Unit has plans to work with programs and individual faculty members to continue the investigation and exploration of improved strategies to assess issues of diversity, especially in the areas of professional behaviors. Working closely with the Unit’s committee on Faculty Qualifications, Performance, and Development (FQPD) it is anticipated that professional development opportunities will be offered to faculty and programs throughout the Unit in regards to assessment, and specifically on issues of diversity and the professional behaviors of fairness and all students can learn. It is also imagined that these faculty development opportunities will incorporate the analysis and interpretation of diversity data.

Recruitment efforts for new hires within the PEU for faculty will embrace the University’s core values and beliefs as they pertain to diversity through good-faith efforts to increase faculty diversity. This commitment will extend beyond new faculty hires and incorporate hires for staff positions, student workers, and graduate assistants. In addition, recruitment of candidates from under-represented populations will continue. Finally, working with the University’s International Programs, admissions policies and program practices will be examined to be more conducive to the international candidate. By enhancing candidate diversity throughout the PEU, the educational experiences for everyone will be improved, ultimately providing teachers and other school professionals essential competencies to effectively work with individuals of different ethnicity,
race, socioeconomic status, gender, exceptionalities, language, religion, sexual orientation, or from different geographic areas.

From an organizational standpoint, the Diversity committee will initiate preliminary conversations with the College of Arts and Sciences, College of Visual and Performing Arts, and the School of Business Administration to incorporate the University’s and Unit’s focus on diversity in these colleges’ and school’s strategic plans and program missions. These efforts will begin with the University’s core values addressing internationalism, diversity, and community among student, faculty, and staff and hopefully incorporate the Unit’s conceptual model of respect for human dignity and individual worth.

Progress in regard to placing candidates in diverse settings will continue through partnerships with schools on Montana’s Indian Reservations and other locations with diverse groups of students. The use of partnerships in other geographical locations will continue providing candidates at UM more extensive experiences with student populations from low socio-economic groups, English language learners, and different ethnic/racial groups, including those with exceptionalities. It is projected that technology will play an ever increasing role in providing opportunities not typically afforded to candidates in states similar to Montana. Utilization of state of the art technology available in the Phyllis J. Washington College of Education and Human Sciences will provide the Unit’s candidates experiences that approximate actual school settings offering candidates numerous opportunities for interacting with inner city populations via online interchanges. It is projected that these virtually immersive field experiences will become an important component of the candidates’ filed experiences at UM.

The incorporation of Montana’s Indian Education for All (IEFA) will carry on throughout programs in the PEU. The recognition of the intent of IEFA will also enhance the learning experience of all students as the foundational values of IEFA also apply to students who are not Montana American Indians. Working from the core knowledge that students within different populations differ in their approaches to learning, candidates at UM will expand their abilities to recognize and effectively deal with personal, cultural, and socioeconomic biases.

4.2. b Continuous Improvement: Plans for sustaining and enhancing performance

The PEU is moving forward, actively pursuing continuous improvement in the area of diversity through the exploration of valid assessment instruments and progressive standards that will apply to all graduates. Professional development opportunities that may be highly relevant to PEU faculty include assessment and issues of diversity including fairness and the belief that all students can learn.

Recruitment efforts for new hires within the PEU for faculty will continue to embrace the University’s core values and beliefs as they pertain to diversity through good-faith efforts to increase faculty diversity. This commitment will extend beyond new faculty hires and incorporate hires for staff positions, student workers, and graduate assistants. In addition, recruitment of candidates from under-represented populations will continue. Finally, through collaboration with the University’s International Programs, admissions policies and program practices will be examined to make them more conducive to the international candidate. By enhancing candidate diversity throughout the PEU, the educational experiences for everyone will be improved, ultimately providing teachers and other school professionals essential competencies to effectively work with individuals of different ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, gender, exceptionalities, language, religion, sexual orientation, or origin.
From an organizational standpoint, the PEC Diversity committee will engage members of all four schools/colleges in the PEU in conversations regarding diversity, including a discussion of strategic plans and program missions. These efforts will begin with the University’s core values addressing internationalism, diversity, and community among students, faculty, and staff and incorporate the Unit’s conceptual model of respect for human dignity and individual worth.

Technology will play an ever-increasing role in systematically providing licensure candidates opportunities to work with diverse P-12 student populations not typically afforded to candidates in states similar to Montana. Utilization of state-of-the-art technology available in the Phyllis J. Washington College of Education and Human Sciences will provide candidates experiences that approximate actual school settings offering numerous opportunities for interacting with inner city populations via online interchanges and 1-1 virtual tutoring.

The incorporation of Montana’s Indian Education for All (IEFA) will carry on throughout programs in the PEU. Recognition of the intent of IEFA will also enhance the learning experience of all students as the foundational values of IEFA also apply to students who are not Montana American Indians. Working from the core knowledge that students within different populations differ in their approaches to learning, candidates at UM will expand their abilities to recognize and effectively deal with personal, cultural, and socioeconomic biases.

II. Unit Standards

Standard 5: Faculty Qualifications, Performance, and Development

5.1 Unit professional education faculty contributes to the preparation of effective educators through scholarship, service, teaching, collaboration, and assessment of their performance.

The ability of the professional education faculty within the Professional Education Unit (PEU) at The University of Montana (UM) to positively contribute to the preparation of effective educators begins with the faculty member’s professional background and earned academic degrees. Through its oversight, the PEU reviews the qualifications of the professional education faculty to include their teaching or other contemporary professional experience in P-12 schools as well as their academic preparation and exceptional expertise. Field Experience or Internship Supervisors and clinical faculty across the Unit must be currently licensed. Clinical faculty for initial licensure must also be currently licensed or recently retired and have at least three years of successful teaching experience, currently teach or have taught in the same area of specialization as the teacher candidate, and have the approval of the school administrator(s) and the Director of Field Experiences.

The evaluation of professional education faculty begins with The University of Montana’s annual faculty evaluation process. This evaluation process is part of the Collective bargaining Agreement between The University of Montana University Faculty Association and the Montana University System (CBA) and is systematic and comprehensive in scope. In the case of the PEU, this involves faculty in the Phyllis J. Washington College of Education and Human Sciences (PJWCoEHS), College of Arts and Sciences (CAS), College of Visual and Performing Arts (CVPA), and the School of Business Administration (SOBA). From this evaluation of faculty qualifications, faculty teaching assignments and workload are the responsibility of Deans, determined in concert with Department Chairs to address the specific needs of each program with qualified faculty, and subject to approval by the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs (CBA 6.210, p. 16). This systematic evaluation process extends beyond the PEU and incorporates...
University policies, practices, and Collective Bargaining Agreements involving reviews of the faculty member’s performance by candidates, department peers, Chairs, Deans, and the Provost.

Professional education faculty are evaluated in the areas of teaching, scholarship/creative activities, and professional service as per the CBA under section 10.000 “Unit Standards and Faculty Evaluations.” The CBA provides that “every member of the bargaining unit” is subject to the annual faculty evaluation process (CBA 10.210, p. 33). All programs within the PEU have specific Unit Standards that articulate the expectations and requirements of faculty in that program. The Unit Standards must align with the CBA and be consistent with University Standards (CBA, 10.120 (3a)) in the areas of teaching, scholarship/creative activity, and service. These Unit Standards are approved by The University of Montana’s Standards Committee and the Provost. Clinical faculty are supervised by the Director of Field Experiences, and their annual review incorporates survey data and comments by each candidate. This information is shared with the clinical faculty member in a manner to protect the confidentiality of the candidates.

As articulated in the CBA, all University faculty are responsible for effective instruction, have a depth and breadth of knowledge in the field they teach, and are able to communicate this information to candidates. In addition, it is a University expectation that the faculty member “maintain a critical attitude toward his/her teaching and should strive to continuously improve it” (CBA, section 6.200, p. 15).

Teaching performance by professional education faculty is evaluated and reviewed by candidates and peers as articulated in the CBA. Specifics of each program’s evaluation of faculty teaching are articulated in the Unit Standards for that program. Faculty teaching is evaluated using an existing course evaluation form, a specific unit evaluation form, or the UFA-Administration Committee’s form for at least one course each semester. Some programs within the PEU exceed the requirements of the CBA and require evaluations from all courses taught. These teaching evaluations are reviewed and evaluated at a variety of levels according to the CBA and Unit Standards. Professional education faculty are provided with the evaluations from each entity reviewing the faculty member’s teaching performance.

Professional education faculty within the PEU are aware of the specific proficiencies articulated in professional, state, and national standards. The professional, state, and national proficiencies are evidenced by course syllabi and assignments as well as by the candidate’s responses on teaching evaluations, exit surveys, and alumni surveys. It is common practice throughout the PEC that graduate teaching assistants are mentored by an accomplished professor with expertise in the course content and required pedagogy. Professional education faculty members are reflective, critical thinking practitioners who participate in and contribute to their respective discipline and inform practice within and beyond the PEU through teaching, scholarship and creative activities, and professional service.

Research and scholarly/creative activities are cornerstones of the university’s mission. They advance knowledge and understanding, underpin instruction, improve the quality of life and enhance economic development. Scholarly and creative activities also fall under the purview of the CBA and vary by specific Unit Standards. Professional education faculty are required to participate in ongoing scholarly and/or creative activities and are strongly encouraged to incorporate new knowledge gained from these activities into their courses.

The University CBA specifically articulates the responsibility of scholars to be current in the advances in their chosen field and to engage in research and creative activities. These scholarly and creative activities also require judgment by peers (CBA, Sec 6.210 p. 16). The University and University Faculty Association, through the CBA, recognize that the responsibilities of a teacher and scholar/creative artist are not mutually exclusive but rather overlapping and complementary.
Also recognized in the CBA is the relationship between the function and responsibilities of a scholar to inform teaching and the opportunity for scholarship or creative activity to grow out of the work of teaching (CBA, Sec 6.200, p. 16).

As a result of scholarly publications and creative activities in their fields of specialization, professional education faculty are actively engaged in inquiry, incorporating knowledge generation and the questioning of the field to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching. Faculty share their research and ideas beyond the classroom as they actively engage in a community of learners participating in a variety of events throughout the year. Examples of events fostering a community of learners are: the University’s Professional Development Series; Maurine and Mike Mansfield Library Workshops; the Phyllis J. Washington College of Education and Human Sciences’ Teaching Tools for the College Classroom (T²C²) and annual Phi Delta Kappa (PDK) Research Symposias; the CAS Proposal Development Series and the Pedagogy Project; the SOBA sponsored lectures; CVPA faculty performances; and campus-wide brown bag sessions.

Professional service activities are an integral part of the academic life of faculty at UM. Professional service is also an expectation of professional education faculty and evaluated as articulated in the CBA (10.340). At The University of Montana, professional service is understood as “consulting or other outside work for agencies, communities, schools, etc.; serving on advisory boards, and service on campus committees” (CBA, Sec. 10.120, p. 32). Professional service for the professional education faculty is also specifically articulated in the Unit Standards for each program. Professional service typically involves activities in the program/department, college/school, University, and the broader community and includes leadership positions as well as committee participation. As stipulated in the CBA, all tenure-track faculty members in the PEU are engaged in teaching, research and creative endeavors, and service. Faculty research and service activities are presented in Qualification and Assignments of Professional Education Unit Faculty.

Professional Development for professional education faculty begins with requirements and expectations articulated in the CBA. The CBA specifically states that university faculty should “strive continuously to improve it [teaching]” (CBA, section 6.200, p. 15). In support of this requirement, UM has an extensive support system for faculty development. The Office of the Provost oversees the Faculty Development Office. In addition to University-wide professional development opportunities, specific professional development activities are provided by the three colleges and one professional school within the PEU. Clinical faculty in the PEU receive continued professional development through the Field Experience Office. These development opportunities are hosted each semester and provide an overview of the program mission and goals, candidate expectations, assessment procedures, and recommendations for working with candidates. A recorded session is available for clinical faculty unable to attend faculty development activities.

The Faculty Development Office coordinates and develops opportunities for faculty to grow professionally and personally. The Office provides resources to foster teaching, research/creative activity, and service. It aims to sustain faculty professional goals, promote career satisfaction and advancement, and support the mission of The University of Montana. A Steering Committee with representatives from the PEU and composed largely of faculty members advises the Faculty Development Office. The Faculty Development Office provides professional development opportunities, resources, and support in the general areas of (a) Professional Development; (b) Research and Creative Activities; (c) Teaching and Assessment; (d) Advising; and (e) Career Satisfaction.

Faculty service and collaboration activities in schools and with the professional community are embedded in the three major responsibilities of faculty at UM. These three areas are teaching,
scholarship/creative activities, and professional service. It is through teaching, scholarly/creative activities, and professional service that PEU faculty engage colleagues and the broader community in collaborative efforts to enhance the educational experience of candidates. This is accomplished in the area of teaching through special course workshops with P-12 partners, courses incorporating service learning, the use of educational professionals on evaluation committees, and outreach initiatives in schools and communities. Collaboration also occurs with colleagues and the broader community through research projects, co-authoring professional articles, participation in the PDK Research Symposia, and participation in and presentations at state, regional, national, and international conferences. Professional collaboration includes activities such as consulting for state education agencies, school districts, and schools; conducting educational presentations and trainings; and membership on committees, Boards, and Task Forces at the local, state, and national levels.

5.2.b Continuous Improvement: Summary of data-based activities and changes

Candidate performance has been enhanced by the professional development opportunities offered at both the macro and micro levels. At the University level are the President’s Lecture Series, the Provost’s Distinguished Faculty Lecture Series, and campus-wide faculty development activities coordinated by the Faculty Development Office at The University of Montana (UM). More specific professional development for the faculty of the Professional Education Unit (PEU) originates at the various College and School levels. In addition, individual faculty development opportunities are encouraged and supported at the University, College/School, and Department Levels. Many of these College and School faculty development opportunities are also coordinated by the University’s Faculty Development Office and are offered to faculty outside of the PEU. Inviting faculty beyond the PEU provides a rich learning environment where colleagues from a wide range of disciplines interact, exchange ideas, and share expertise.

**Pedagogy Project.**
The College of Arts and Sciences Pedagogy Project is a faculty development opportunity encouraging reflection and discussion about teaching at UM. With support from the African American Studies Program and the Faculty Development Office, the Pedagogy Project currently sponsors two initiatives: a Faculty Discussion Series and the Small Group Analysis Feedback Program. Examples of the Pedagogy Project’s topics are: “Where’s Waldo? Personalizing Large Lecture Classes”, “Tell Me What You Want (What You Really, Really Want)”, “Communicating Assignment Expectations Before It’s Too Late”, and “Navigating the Classroom Generation Gap.”

**Civic Engagement.**
Faculty and candidate service activities are supported through the University’s Office for Civic Engagement. The Office for Civic Engagement provides faculty development funding to those faculty who offer service learning courses in partnership with the Missoula Flagship afterschool program. Candidates can also take specific service learning courses offered by the Colleges and Schools within the PEU. The University defines service learning as “a method of teaching and learning in which students, faculty, and community partners work together to enhance candidate learning by applying academic knowledge in a community-based setting.”

**Technology and the Learning Environment**
One way that technology has enhanced the learning experience for candidates in the PEU is through expanded delivery models such as online courses, blended courses, online course supplements, Camtasia, and iTunesU. The University of Montana’s School of Extended Learning
Services provides numerous faculty resources as well as faculty development opportunities for UMOnline and Moodle. Moodle is an open-source learning management system that is used by UM to deliver online learning. Faculty are also assisted in the design of online courses through UMOnline’s Instructional Design and Development Team and the Innovation Studio which provides one-on-one assistance with Moodle and a host of multimedia.

The University of Montana’s Information Technology Office (IT) has as one of its foci, technology literacy and innovation for teaching, learning, and research. IT provides support to faculty through the annual Tech Fair which showcases campus technologies and support services vital to the success of UM faculty. The Information Technology Office also offers an array of Information Technology (IT) Trainings, many of which are on demand, for faculty.

Maureen and Mike Mansfield Library Workshops. Campus-wide workshops for faculty and candidates are conducted through the Maureen and Mike Mansfield Library on the UM campus. These hour long workshops cover a range of topics from “Navigating Copyright for Teaching and Research” to “Conducting Literature Reviews” to “Managing Your Research with RefWorks.” Offered throughout each semester, these workshops bring together faculty and candidates form across campus providing opportunities for collegial interactions.

5.2.b Continuous Improvement: Plans for sustaining and enhancing performance

The evolution of the Professional Education Unit (PEU) and movement to Target on Standard Six: Governance has provided a new standing committee structure that is aligned with the six NCATE/CAEP Standards. With committees addressing each standard, a specific standing committee focused on Faculty Qualifications, Performance, and Development (FQPD) continues to work toward influencing the recruitment, selection, and subsequent development of faculty throughout the PEU.

Through the workings of the FQPD committee, more precise faculty data will be sought in the areas of scholarship, funded grants, and collaboration with the field. It is anticipated that the yearly report generated from this committee will become more specific and involve data pertaining to the previous year’s scholarship, funded grants, and sponsored programs specifically aligned with the Unit’s Conceptual Framework and Professional Behaviors.

Through networking with the various faculty development efforts within the Phyllis J. Washington College of Education and Human Sciences, College of Arts and Sciences, College of Visual and Performing Arts, and the School of Business Administration, the FQPD committee works to coordinate professional development within the PEU. These efforts seek to increase the cross-pollination of faculty ideas and expertise across the Unit. The FQPD committee functions as a clearing house for faculty development specific to the PEU, the NCATE/CAEP Standards, and the Montana Professional Educator Preparation Program (MTPEPP) Standards. It is a goal to have a representative from the Provost’s Faculty Development Office on the FQPD committee. A high priority for the FQPD committee will be a PEU-wide needs assessment.

The FQPD Committee will also be involved with the PEU standing committees focused on Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Professional Dispositions; Assessment Systems and Unit Evaluations; Field Experience and Clinical Practice; Diversity; and Governance. This working relationship will be through the PEU Executive Committee and efforts will be made to identify faculty development needs across the PEU. A working relationship will exist with the Assessment Systems and Unit Evaluations Committee to use candidate and program assessment data to identify faculty development needs within specific programs. In addition to the relationships in the PEU Executive Committee, it is planned that the Assessment Systems and Unit Evaluations
Committee will share at least one member. Initial areas for considerations regarding faculty development are the development and use of assessment rubrics, interpretation of candidate data, seminars on the validity, reliability, and bias of assessments.

II. Unit Standards

Standard 6: Unit Governance and Resources

6.1 The PEU governance system and resources contribute to the preparation of candidates to meet professional, state, and institutional standards.

The University of Montana (UM) and the Professional Education Unit function within a well-defined governance system that assures broad involvement in program administration and decision-making. UM operates under the Montana Board of Regents and the negotiated Collective Bargaining Agreement (Collective Bargaining Agreement) between The University of Montana University Faculty Association and the Montana University System. President Royce Engstrom serves as the chief executive officer of the institution and is appointed by the BOR. The President oversees campus Vice Presidents including the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Vice President for Student Affairs, and the Vice President for Administration and Finance. (President’s Organizational Chart). The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Perry Brown, is responsible for oversight of the deans and faculty of the academic colleges of the university. (Provost’s Organizational Chart).

The Professional Education Unit (PEU) at UM is under the authority of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs and includes all programs engaged in the initial and advanced preparation of teachers and other school professionals. These programs are housed in the Phyllis J. Washington College of Education and Human Sciences, the College of Arts and Sciences, the School of Business Administration, and the College of Visual and Performing Arts. (PEU – PEC Description)

Recognized as the Unit Head, Dean Roberta D. Evans of the Phyllis J. Washington College of Education and Human Sciences provides leadership for the Professional Education Unit. Appointed and evaluated by the Provost, the PJWCoEHS dean works closely with the Provost, other PEU deans, and faculty to assure that the mission and programs of the Unit are developed, delivered, and evaluated successfully.

UM’s Professional Education Unit governance structure, the Professional Education Council (PEC), was established by the President in 2006 as a University Committee, and was revised in Spring 2011 to align with the continuous improvement model. Membership in the PEC (33 total) includes Deans of each PEU college/school as well as representatives from programs in the PEU, P-12 practitioners, and undergraduate and graduate candidates. Through monthly meetings as well as the work of Standing Committees, the PEC establishes a formal and effective structure for information sharing, discussion among all stakeholders supporting data driven decision-making and the continuous improvement of programs in the Unit (PEC Bylaws).

To support the continuous improvement process for programs in the PEU, the Professional Education Council works in concert with UM policies and procedures and the CBA to effectively coordinate the planning, delivery, and operation of all programs for the preparation of teachers and other school professionals. In accordance with UM curriculum change policies (Curriculum Review Process), the PEC Curriculum Review Committee reviews completed PEU proposals as part of the requirement for signatures of the affected unit(s) on course or forms.
Enrollment Services-Admissions assumes the responsibility for undergraduate recruitment and admission of students at UM. Admission to the University is determined by University policy and criteria are clearly articulated on the Admissions website (Enrollment Services Undergraduate Admission Requirements) and in the UM Course Catalog (Catalog Undergraduate Admission Requirements).

Students seeking admission at the Masters level apply through the Graduate School (Graduate Degree Admission). The Graduate School and the Graduate Dean administer all graduate programs at The University of Montana except the law degree. Graduate students must meet the requirements of the Graduate School as well as the application and admission criteria specific to the professional program (Graduate Degree Programs Application and Admission Criteria). The academic department the candidate is applying to conducts the initial evaluation of the application packet and submits the application and a recommendation to the Graduate School for the final decision regarding admission.

The Unit ensures that candidates have access to student services such as advising and counseling. As articulated in Section 6.200 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement quality advising is highly valued and supported. Undergraduate students in the P-8 initial licensure program enter as Pre-Education Majors and are assigned to one of two Academic Advisors in the PJWCoEHS Teacher Education Services for the duration of their degree program (Teacher Education Policy Handbook, Page 11). Secondary (5-12) and P-12 licensure candidates major in the department of their chosen teaching area, and are initially assigned advisors in those academic homes. Upon acceptance to the Secondary Education Licensure Program, candidates are co-advised having an advisor within their academic major and an advisor within the Department of Curriculum and Instruction (Teacher Education Policy Handbook, Secondary Candidate Advising, pages 17-18).

High quality student services are readily available for candidates including Disability Services, the Office of Career Services, and the Curry Health Center (2012-13 Course Catalog: Student Services). Additionally, as a result of reported campus sexual assaults and a Special Investigation concluding January 2012, student support services have been enhanced with a focus on prevention and support for victims of sexual misconduct or sexual assault. This includes development of an online tutorial, Personal Empowerment through Self Awareness to educate the campus community about sexual violence issues and prevention strategies.

UM ensures that its recruitment materials, academic calendar, catalog, and grading policies are clear, accurate and current through the work of several committees and administrative departments. These documents and procedures are university-wide. Development of the UM Course Catalog is based on submissions from members of the PEU. These processes enable quality control over its general information provided to the public.

The PEU is uniquely poised to collaborate with P-12 practitioners in program design, delivery, and evaluation given the campus-wide focus on P-20 partnerships in UM’s 2020 Strategic Plan. Strategic Issue 1, Partnering for Student Success, places the preparation of K-12 students at the heart of student success at the collegiate level. This strong P-20 focus has systematically guided collaboration with P-12 practitioners at the campus level. At the Unit level, P-12 practitioners are involved in every phase of the continuous improvement process through membership on the PJWCoEHS Advisory Board and Professional Education Council and annual employer surveys. Departments develop program relevant Unit Standards, in conjunction with the collective bargaining agreement, which allows clinically based programs to define P-12 clinical participation and collaboration activities as evidence of faculty performance – further highlighting and supporting P-20 partnerships.
At the state level, Montana has maintained ongoing fiscal well-being through the economic downturn. Campus-wide programs and the unit budget provide strong support for continuous improvement initiatives through funding designated for assessment, technology, professional development, and distance learning. The Unit receives budgetary allocations that are proportional to other units on campus with clinical components and support high quality work within the Unit and with school partners (Budgets of Comparable Units). Additionally, PJWCoEHS candidate scholarships increased from $46,815 FY12 to $147,568 FY13 to significantly enhance student support.

Reflective of the diverse undergraduate and graduate programs on the UM campus, the Collective Bargaining Agreement, Section 6.210 clarifies that the instructional workload is to be determined at the School/College and Department levels. Assignments are made relative to the total activity of the faculty member (including research, scholarship, creative service, and activity) and Deans are formally responsible for assigning faculty teaching workloads, with consultation and input from the department chair and the Unit faculty. Through this process, departments have flexibility in determining teaching load as demonstrated in a comparison of undergraduate class size and organized class sections assigned to tenure-track faculty per FTE (Average Class Size & OCS Per Faculty FTE). For example, some departments opt to teach larger class sessions while teaching fewer organized class sections. In alignment with NCATE guidelines and typical of state universities, a three-course teaching load is common in the professional education programs. The CBA establishes formal policies and procedures that include on-line course delivery in determining faculty load. Courses taught ‘in load’ are given equal weighting whether delivered online, in traditional face-to-face classroom settings, or any blended combinations. Within this framework, UMOnline has been established to provide comprehensive support for faculty in the design and delivery of online and blended courses.

Part-time and clinical faculty members are valued by the Unit for their special expertise and provide strong contributions to the programs through teaching and/or supervision activities. Department chairs establish recruitment criteria for part-time faculty and work closely with these individuals to ensure consistency and quality of teaching, assessment, and other professional expectations. Department chairs provide adjuncts with sample syllabi that include required course outcomes and review adjunct course evaluations by each semester. The Director of Field Experiences provides regular and ongoing training for University Supervisors where information, ideas, critiques, and recommendations are shared to contribute to the review and revision of the programs. Clinical supervision does not exceed 15 practicum students per semester.

Departmental and college administrative staff members provide support for faculty members across the Unit. In the PJWCoEHS, each department employs an Administrative Assistant, student employees, and graduate assistants to support faculty teaching and mentoring.

The PEU has outstanding facilities that support candidates in meeting standards. Spring 2009, The University of Montana opened the newly constructed Phyllis J. Washington Education Center (PJWEC). This 27,000 sq. ft. addition to the Education Building was designed specifically for the preparation of education professionals for the 21st century and includes high-tech classrooms that allow faculty to model the use of technology, classrooms specifically designed to teach math and science instructional methods, distance-learning studios, and an on-site early childhood program to provide early clinical experience. Two units in the PJWEC, the Technology Resource Center and Technology and Media Services, collaborate with the University’s central Information Technology organization to provide on-site and distance technology support that ensures students, faculty, staff, and teachers within the community have access to high-speed, state-of-the-art technology for instructional and educational purposes.
The Maureen and Mike Mansfield Library at The University of Montana is the largest in the state in terms of facility square footage, staff, and collection size. The Library employs more than 90 individuals and averages more than 11,000 student visits per week. During the 2010-2011 academic year, the Mansfield Library filled more than 31,000 interlibrary loan requests, including many to other Montana libraries.

6.2.A Moving to the Target Level

Through careful review of data, progress and recent state and campus initiatives, the Professional Education Unit has identified Standard 6: Unit Governance and Resources. The transition to the Continuous Improvement model strengthened not only our analytical practices, but of even greater significance—the infrastructure needed to support them. That is because we recognized that what is often overlooked with mere reporting models is that the cycles only work when the right stakeholders—decision-makers, to be sure—are involved in the educational process and have come together to build a strong culture where they share the commitment to excellence. Our Professional Education Council is comprised of representatives of all the professional programs and groups mentioned earlier as partners, including three other campus academic deans and exemplary P-12 professionals. Together, they provide us with clear channels of communication, focused analysis of emergent data, and vital guidance as we lead the University’s education programs.

Coupled with this renewal of our governance council are unparalleled resources available to support candidate performance and program quality. Of particular note is our new facility, constructed in part due to a donor who gave the University its largest gift ever received, leading 998 others to similarly contribute toward the construction of the Education Center in 2009. Noted among education professionals statewide as a popular site for regional conferences in addition to our wide array of programs, the facility has become emblematic of our prominence on campus and has proven invaluable as a source of identity for candidates. We find it beneficial as a recruitment tool, as well. The convergence of resources and re-calibration of governance has let to strategic efforts targeting candidate performance and program quality, fully supporting our mission to prepare high quality graduates.

In the following sections, progress and accomplishments are presented in each target area of the standard, followed by an explanation of our rationale. We believe the evidence provided confirms that our efforts in unit governance and resources meet target level performance; indeed, they are foundational to the continuous improvement pursued across all other standard areas.

6a. Unit Leadership and Authority
The PEC effectively coordinates all programs in the Unit

Successful implementation of the NCATE/CAEP continuous improvement model requires a strong Unit culture with a shared commitment to excellence. To this end, several initiatives have been implemented in the Professional Education Council since 2011 to improve communication and strengthen the oversight and coordination of all programs in the Unit. Oversight and authority for the PEC was transitioned to the Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, and the leadership of the Dean of the Phyllis J. Washington College of Education and Human Sciences as the Unit Head was reaffirmed. At the request of the PJWCoEHS and in collaboration with other Deans in the Professional Education Unit, the Provost appointed Deans of the Colleges of Arts and Science, Visual and Performing Arts, and School of Business Administration as ex-
officio members of the Professional Education Council. Additionally, by-laws were revised to establish a monthly meeting schedule to increase communication. Collaboration has been enhanced through these efforts, and the results have been palpable. For example, this year, the Fall 2012 Curriculum Review was considered the smoothest-ever process for review and consultation of curricula as proposed changes supporting state and national accreditations standards were passed, aligned with the conceptual framework of the Professional Education Unit, and designed with a collective expectation for the ongoing collection of data for identified key assessments. Through these multi-disciplinary collaborative discussions, our candidates are assured a cohesive, standards-based preparation experience. Just as important to us is the increasingly broad-based understanding exhibited by diverse faculty members regarding where and how specific content is taught in the curriculum.

The PEU collaborates with p-12 professionals in program design, delivery, and evaluation

The PEU has established a clear focus on partnerships and collaborative involvement of P-12 practitioners for program improvement. In 2009, the first of a series of program pilots, the 400-Block Pilot, was developed with school professionals and implemented in four schools in the greater Missoula community. Based upon feedback gathered via on-site focus groups in six schools, emerging literature regarding best practice in clinical placements, and an analysis of candidate exit data, a new immersion model was co-created with our P-12 partners. Implemented Spring 2009 and Fall 2010, four methods courses were offered as an intensive during the first ten weeks of the semester; this was immediately followed by a five-week, full-immersion field experience. This successful model was then adopted in 2010. Two additional pilots have been co-created and implemented with P-12 practitioners. These include the Montana Assessment-Guided Instruction in Learning Environments (AGILE) Project, funded by the Carnegie Corporation to establish a Response to Intervention (RtI) teaching partnership between the College and area elementary school classrooms and the current Professional Development School Model (PDSM) pilot. Both the 400 Block Pilot and the AGILE projects informed the development of the Curriculum Revision Proposal for 2013-2014 and will have a lasting influence on the preparation of future teachers. The PDSM is still in the pilot phase, but multiple administrators have contacted the Unit expressing interest in expanding the program to additional schools. The Unit also collaborates with P-12 partners through the new PJWCoEHS Advisory Board which strategically includes three P-12 practitioners, and through membership in the Professional Education Council.

The PEU is recognized as a leader by faculty in other units and the P-12 community.

Faculty in the PEU are perceived as leaders in innovation and best practice across P-20 communities and are frequently sought out as collaborators and leaders in P-20 initiatives. Faculty in the PJWCoEHS co-developed the UM+MCPS: Transforming Public Education through Collaboration and Innovation conference in collaboration with Missoula County Public School District administration and teachers. At this conference, local academic leaders in both K-12 and higher education systems, as well as Missoula business professionals, convened to share how education is being transformed by programs that exemplify UM's strategic plan, "UM 2020: Building a University for the Global Century" and the Missoula County School District's "21st Century Model of Change." The conference also explored the question: “In a world of constant change, how might leaders in The University of Montana, Missoula County Public Schools and the greater Missoula community work together to cultivate imagination and innovation among both teachers and students in classrooms from preschool to graduate school?” As a result of this
collaboration, we are now pursuing an NSF MSP grant to fund a STEM Teacher Externship program. The Mobilize Missoula Project will partner interdisciplinary teams of middle and high school teachers, counselors, and administrators with local STEM industries and agencies for multi-week summer externships. These partnerships will map, leverage, and mobilize local STEM resources for fostering STEM education.

The Montana Digital Academy was created by the Montana legislature in 2009 as a partnership among many Montana education associations to foster online education for K-12 students. Due to campus advocacy and support, it was located in the PJWCoEHS, linking Montana K-12 and higher education systems. This state virtual school employs Montana teachers and provides access to high-quality curriculum opportunities across our rural state. It is the only online K-12 school housed at a university in the United States, and this unique partnership has as its positive side benefits the capacity to greatly enhance college readiness for Montana students and foster collaborative innovations in the preparation of K-12 school professionals. In collaboration with the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, a pilot program matches teacher candidates with struggling students in diverse settings across the nation to provide Virtual Intervention. Through this model, teacher candidates are gaining valuable on-line teaching skills and their student outcomes are demonstrating success. Pilots have also been launched to provide Online Counseling opportunities, where graduate students enrolled in the Counselor Education Department serve high school students’ needs. Finally, the Department of Educational Leadership is partnering with the MTDA to provide training and professional development for prospective Montana K-12 school principals and superintendents.

The unit provides professional development on effective teaching for faculty in other units of the institution

An emphasis of faculty development activities provided by the PJWCoEHS over the previous three years has been on technology and the integration of technology into the classroom teaching environment. Faculty and candidate experiences with technology have been greatly improved since 2009 with the state-of-the-art technology provided in classrooms, conference rooms, and gathering areas throughout the new Phyllis J. Washington Education Center (PJWEC). At the center of the professional development activities in the PEU is the PJWCoEHS Learning Ecosystem Optimization (LEO) committee. This committee is responsible for the development, organization, and facilitation of the weekly seminars in a lecture series entitled Teaching Tools for the College Classroom. These innovative and interactive seminars began in the fall of 2011 and are designed to aid faculty, staff, and students in the development and modeling of best practices related to teaching. Each seminar addresses the integration of technology as it applies to the learning environment. By enhancing the technological knowledge of professional education faculty, this knowledge will not only provide a rich classroom environment for the candidates’ learning experiences, but it will also transfer to the candidates’ own classrooms later. Past seminar topics have included: “Illustrator,” “iPAd2 Filming,” “Go To Meeting,” “Issuu,” “SmartBoard,” “CMAp Tools & Mind Mapping,” “Google Docs,” “Prezi,” “Google Earth,” “Ethics of Social Networking and Teaching,” “Screeencasting,” “Macros in Office,” and “Designing Visual Images/OMNIglobe.”

Additionally, the Phyllis J. Washington College of Education and Human Sciences created a select state-wide event, “Converge 2012: A Showcase of Digital Innovation in Learning.” More than 80 community guests, vendors, and university faculty attended the symposium which featured keynote speaker Gary Lopez of the Monterey Institute of Technology. Break-out sessions
highlighted PJWCoEHS faculty and technology. This event buoyed recognition of Unit faculty technology knowledge, skills, and innovative spirit. By way of tangible follow-up, the PJWCoEHS will move forward to pilot the national EdReady math assessment system designed to support high school students’ formative insight to better facilitate their continued secondary-level math pursuit and to foster greater success in transitioning to post-secondary education.

6.b Unit Budget
Unit budgetary allocations permit faculty teaching, scholarship, and service that extend beyond the unit to P-12 education and other programs in the institution

Montana’s economic well-being throughout the economic downturn has afforded stability in funding at The University of Montana. The State appropriated budget for the PJWCoEHS has increased moderately from $2,978,322 in 2008 to $3,438,991 in 2012, which supports ongoing high quality work that extends beyond the Unit to P-12 education and other programs.

The PJWCoEHS houses the Montana Digital Academy - the only statewide online K-12 school initiative partnered with a major institution of higher education. The MTDA assists schools in meeting unique curriculum and staffing challenges by offering upper level courses in mathematics, science, social studies and English/language arts. The Academy is being recognized by Montana school leaders as a critical piece in helping rural and small schools expand their curriculum and enhance their graduation rates. This P-20 partnership, unique across our nation, also supports ongoing opportunity for innovation in the preparation of K-12 teachers and other school professionals for the 21st century. The PJWCoEHS proudly supports the work of the MTDA by providing technical support, offices and meeting spaces, state-of-the-art technology, and in-kind contributions. In 2009, the College provided $17,370 in funds redistributed to P-12 schools to support salaries for teaching online courses. Waived overhead FY10 & FY11 totals $160,000.

The budget supports high-quality work within the unit and its school partners

The mission of the PEU in the preparation of high quality teachers and school professionals is recognized and valued at The University of Montana. In FY 2013, the PJWCoEHS received base funding ($111,000) to support the addition of two faculty lines. In light of the economic downturn, this is a power demonstration of commitment that will further support high-quality work. Unit members in the PJWCoEHS completed a significantly higher number of funding proposals (grants, contracts, foundations) FY12 moving from 23 proposals in 2011 for a proposal total of $4,662,389 to 32 proposals for a total of $10,072,023.

6c. Personnel
Workload policies and practices permit and encourage faculty to professionally contribute on a community, state, regional, or national basis

As demonstrated in the Unit Summary of Faculty Service and Collaborative Activities in Schools, Unit faculty engagement with the P-12 community is vast and diverse with activities ranging from membership on state task forces and committees to providing professional development for teachers, collaborating with parents to create much-needed after-school programs, and providing mental health consultation services for children and youth.

Unit provision of support personnel significantly enhances the effectiveness of faculty in their teaching and mentoring.
Support staff and facilities provide significant support for faculty in the PEU. Since the last reporting period, two full-time professional advisor positions have been funded in the Teacher Education Program to assist licensure candidates with all aspects of advising including curriculum guidance, course sequencing, application to the Teacher Education Program, and graduation planning. In addition, a full-time Program Coordinator position was funded to support the Office of Field Experiences in the development of strong P-12 partnerships. These three positions provide support not only for faculty, but offer exemplary support for our candidates. This support has been strengthened by the construction of the new Phyllis J. Washington Education Center (PJWEC) and a designated a second floor wing that houses Teacher Education Services (TES). TES provides enhanced coordination and delivery of student services in the areas of teacher recruitment, Teacher Education Program admissions, field experiences, and teacher licensure. Faculty also find comprehensive support in the TES whether seeking support of information.

Several initiatives have enhanced the ability of support staff to support the Office of the Provost provided funding to increase the FTE for two Administrative Associates in the PJWCoEHS. Across the PEU, faculty at UM demonstrate high levels of engagement in community and public service. As highlighted in the recent Higher Education Research Institute Faculty Survey, 68 percent of UM's faculty spend at least one hour each week engaging in community or public service, compared with 50 percent of faculty at other public institutions in the country. The unit supports professional development activities that engage faculty in dialogue and skill development related to emerging theories and practices.

In addition to University-wide professional development offered through the Faculty Development Office (FDO), specific professional development activities are provided by the three colleges and one professional school within the PEU. Members of the PEU also serve on the planning committees for the FDO. Two popular professional development opportunities are described below and are noteworthy in their focus on dialogue as a strategy for Improving teaching practice.

**Pedagogy Project.** The College of Arts and Sciences Pedagogy Project is a faculty development opportunity encouraging reflection and discussion about teaching at UM. With support from the African American Studies Program and the Faculty Development Office, the Pedagogy Project currently sponsors two initiatives: a Faculty Discussion Series and the Small Group Analysis Feedback Program. Examples of the Pedagogy Project’s topics are: “Where’s Waldo? Personalizing Large Lecture Classes”, “Tell Me What You Want (What You Really, Really Want)”, “Communicating Assignment Expectations Before It’s Too Late”, and “Navigating the Classroom Generation Gap.” The Small Group Analysis Program of the Pedagogy Project provides an opportunity to give and receive feedback on classroom instruction. During the 2011-12 school year, fourteen fellows participated from the following areas: Classical and Modern.
Languages, Communication Studies, Computer Sciences, English, History, Liberal Arts, Political Sciences, Sociology, and Women’s Studies. This small group analysis process allowed instructors to receive feedback from their students while their course was in process. An outside facilitator asked students to identify 1) what aspects of the course are enhancing their learning; 2) what could be improved to enhance their learning; and 3) what they can do to enhance their learning. The questions were responded to in small groups and on an individual basis in anonymous process conducted with the instructor out of the room.

This year marks the 7th annual Day of Dialog: A Campus-Wide Diversity Symposium at UM. The Day of Dialog is a campus-wide series of events focused on topics of diversity. Candidates, students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community members discuss, present, perform, and exhibit art throughout the day. The mission of the Day of Dialog is to provide a forum for honest dialogue in order to explore the complexities of human experience, promote understanding, and create community through the practice of civil discourse.

6d. Unit facilities
The unit has outstanding facilities on campus and with partner schools to support candidates in meeting standards.

With the grand opening of the Phyllis J. Washington Education Center in 2009, The University of Montana proudly reaffirms its commitment to the effective and responsive preparation of education professionals and service to P-12 personnel across Montana. Our new facility was just the start of a highly-contagious wave of 21st century planning among our P-12 partners, thereby affording our teacher candidates ample opportunities for professional growth in schools with newly-renovated or newly-constructed facilities emphasizing contemporary technology. The PJWEC was designed during an 18-month process that engaged education administrators, faculty, and practitioners in research, national travel to visit and explore exemplary teaching/learning facilities, and ongoing meetings with planners and architects to shape construction that aligned with the Unit’s Conceptual Framework and embraced emerging technology and innovation. It features high-tech classrooms and distance-learning studios, as well as classrooms specifically designed to teach math and science instructional methods. Two internal technology units, the Technology Resource Center and Technology and Media Services, are dedicated to supporting faculty in modeling the use of technology throughout the building. Candidates enjoy ongoing mentoring and support as they utilize production rooms and practice their instructional skills reliant upon the latest relevant technology. Given the fluid nature of our partnerships, it is no surprise that where area schools have sought to improve their own facilities (as in Frenchtown School District’s new construction, plans for Lolo School District underway, and recent renovations at Big Sky High School and the Missoula County Public School’s 21st Century Facilities Plan), they have involved our faculty and administration in their efforts, spanning analyses of architects’ focus group sessions, to state presentations for administrators regarding optimizing learning environments in facilities design, to walk-throughs of showcases highlighting levy requests.

Bringing even more vital education to the PJWEC is its prestigious Learning and Belonging Preschool, which incorporates state-of-the-art video and sound systems to provide teaching/learning opportunities for pre-service teachers, parents, and researchers. This brings early childhood and elementary education majors together with students and faculty from a wide array of related areas, including counseling, speech-language pathology, psychology, and sociology. Here again, the rich multi-disciplinary interaction fosters tremendous connections in learning.
Finally, the PJWEC is a destination for students, faculty, and P-12 partners to gather in open learning lounges on all three floors of the building for casual conversations or study time—enhanced by easy access to coffee and snacks at Recess, the Center’s coffee shop. For music, media entertainment, collaborative study, perusal of whimsical art, and sheer camaraderie, the facility stands as a vibrant fixture and heart of the campus for thousands of people every week.

**6e. Unit Resources including technology**

The unit aggressively and successfully secures resources to support high-quality and exemplary programs and projects to ensure that candidates meet standards

Multiple approaches to resource generation are pursued by the unit, and many participants in these efforts are highly successful. As noted, the record of state budget allocations, grants and contracts, self-support cohort programs, and donations from individuals and foundations indicates strong growth and success, despite in some areas national trends downward. This is due, in part, to aggressive administrative approaches and supportive executives who respond to a myriad of proposals shaped by the dean and the College leadership team (chart info speaks to this—a link?). Primarily, too, the success has come through strategic decisions to invest time, resources, and expertise into enhancing the ability of faculty and students toward these pursuits. It is seen as vital capacity-building for the College. For example, as noted, the grant and contract pursuits have increased in number of proposals submitted, and the grant expenditures place the College as the third-largest award recipient on campus, with two researchers ranking among the top ten grant-earners at the University. In most cases, these successful grants utilize and employ students, our candidates in key educational programs. Where possible, grants supporting P-12 students and teachers concurrently use our students as facilitators or guides for specific skills, grade levels, or activities. These have ranged from state grants for summer camps intent upon enhancing sophomore girls’ skills in mathematics, to GEAR UP experiences on campus for middle school students, to Adventures of the Mind, a national conference on youth leadership we designed for 250 high school students from across the United States to attend a multi-day seminar with celebrities, professional athletes, authors, entrepreneurs, and Nobel Prize winners. In sum, grant-writing remains a focus; it is also aggressively pursued and supported, with such attentive activities as experts who deliver training seminars in it. One such seminar is planned for October 30, when more than forty faculty members and graduate students will be trained by Dr. Don Orlich of Washington State University, using copies of his book (purchased for them by the College), entitled *Developing a Winning Grant Proposal*. Additional examples of aggressive strategies and investments in resource generation exist, as well, in donor development. For example, the PJWCoEHS is the only College to have a Development Committee comprised of faculty and chairs, assisted on occasion by students in their efforts. They review large-scale campus development initiatives pursued by the College, and last spring, they traveled as a group to a meeting for deans, other academic leaders, and development officers at the Council for Advancement and Support of Education. Subsequently, the group prepared a proposal for $1.5M request involving a partnership with K-12 schools pursuing specialized training for teachers, professors, school administrators, teacher candidates, and educational administration graduate students together on key topics related to our programs. Candidates experience high-caliber programs and meet standards through numerous efforts to pursue resources in these ways.

The development and implementation of the unit’s assessment system is well funded. The unit serves as an information technology resource in education beyond the education programs--to the institution, community, and other institutions
Funding to support the assessment system has been consistent and robust over the past 3 years. With the growing focus on outcome data and the Unit’s need for a comprehensive database, budgeted support for the development and implementation of the assessment system was initiated in 2009 through course release for two NCATE Coordinators.

At the Unit level, a highly qualified post-doctoral systems analyst was then hired for one year to create the E-PAS system. Now that the system is operational, funding has been provided for AY 2012-13 to support a position reclassification that dedicates a .50 FTE Assessment Manager for the Educator Preparation Assessment System (E-PAS). Seeking base funding for this position is established as the College priority at the December 2012 Academic Officer’s Budget Retreat and we are confident funding will be made available to make this position permanent. This is an essential position in the Unit and discretionary funding is available to maintain the position until permanent funding is provided.