The Montana Residency Demonstration Project - FAQs
2022-2023 School Year

Q - What is the payment schedule for the resident stipend?
A: Residents will be paid $1400 on the 1st of the month starting on September 1, 2022. Payments will be over 10 months with the last payment on June 1, 2023.

Q - What is the payment schedule for the Teacher Leaders?
A: Teacher Leaders will be paid $3000 on December 1, 2022, and $3000 on June 1, 2023.

Q: Will taxes be applied to the Resident and Teacher Leader stipends.
A: Yes, taxes will be applied to each payment.

Q: Do Residents need to complete the FAFSA?
A: Yes, residents will need to complete the FAFSA for the 2022-2023 academic year.

Q: What does the tuition assistance cover?
A: The tuition assistance only covers tuition. Residents are responsible for all other associated college fees.

Q – Will every resident receive partial tuition waivers?
A: No, there are already some residents receiving tuition waivers that would not be eligible for additional support on waivers. OCHE has committed funds only to MUS System colleges and universities.

Q - When a school district has two teacher leaders assigned to a single resident, will they both be paid the $6,000 teacher leader stipend through the funds for this project?
A: No. There is only one teacher leader stipend per resident. The district, in consultation with their identified teacher leaders may strive to have an alternate plan. That plan would need the university’s and the OPI’s approval.

Q - Is there signed paperwork that will need to be completed by the different parties? If so, when should we expect to see that paperwork?
A: Yes, there are MOUs that will need signatures. Districts, residents, and universities will be provided this paperwork in August 2022.
Q – How are housing costs being paid?
A: This is a local district decision, and it varies from: monthly housing allowances, providing district housing, and paying for fuel costs. To participate in the residency demonstration project, districts had to commit to providing housing for the residents. This takes on many different shapes depending on the district. For example, some residents already have housing and receive housing support, others are paying gas for residents that have housing the requires travel to the school, one district had arranged an Air BnB while others provide housing that the district already own. The long and short, residents cannot incur any housing costs during the year.
   1. This is what makes rural opportunities viable.
   2. The goal is that the resident is in a full-time pre-service opportunity with the focus on learning, applying, reflecting, adapting, and adjusting so each resident is prepared on day one as a full-time licensed teacher to enter the classroom with the skills, knowledge, and aptitude to be effective on day 1.

Q – What is the teacher leader scholarship?
A: The teacher leaders are required to enroll in the Teacher Leader Academy Cohort II. Tuition for the academy is regularly $1499.00 per teacher leader, often paid by the district of the teacher leader. Superintendent Arntzen has approved a full scholarship for each teacher leader in this first demonstration project to ensure Teacher Leader skills receive a high priority without tuition being a barrier.

Q – Who pays the Teacher Leader costs for attending the Teacher Leader Academy each month (i.t. travel, lodging, per diem)?
A: Those costs are the responsibility of the local district.

Q: Do I need to teach in Montana after the Residency Program?
A: Yes, Residents are expected to teach in Montana, preferably a rural or significantly impacted schools in Montana for 2 years following the residency.

Q - What happens if the resident does not complete the two-year post resident commitment of teaching in MT?
A: Per the agreement the resident will sign, they will be required to pay back a pro-rated portion of the funds received as part of this project, unless there are extenuating circumstances that are approved by the residency advisory team.
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Q: What calendar will the Resident’s follow, the college calendar on the school district calendar for the location of the residency?
A: Residents will follow the school district calendar. You will report the first PIR day, regardless of the college calendar. They will continue teaching up to the last day of school past the college semester calendar.

Q – When will the resident begin orientation?
A: The resident orientation will be incorporated through a blended approach beginning mid-August. There will be a learning-reflection playbook along with the initial induction class available through the MITI network. The next in-person session will be in Helena October 20-21 during Education Days when schools are closed.
In addition, representatives from the Demonstration Project think tank will be visiting sites during August to meet with each district’s team.

Q – What is the teacher leader micro-credential?
A: The teacher leaders completed four days of learning related to coaching adults for learning. The facilitator of the course will also ensure that by the conclusion of this year’s demonstration project, successful coaching will be recognized with micro-credentialing in Coaching for Learning.

Q: Can a Resident substitute?
A: A Resident can substitute only in their teacher leader’s class for up to 5 days a semester.

Q: Can a resident still keep my job while in the residency?
A: The residency needs to be the primary focus. Reduction of outside workload is recommended.

Q: Are residents provided release time to complete course work.
A: The residency needs to be provided at least 20% of scheduled time per week to complete coursework.

Q – Do schools get to participate more than once in the residency demonstration project?

August 3, 2022, Update
Q – How are districts investing in the program?
A: Districts are showing their commitment to the residency demonstration project by:
   1. Providing the housing costs for residents.
   2. Providing the per diem and travel for teacher leaders.
   3. Ensuring the building principal, superintendent and board are fully invested and supportive of the project.
   4. Ensuring that the teacher-leader is an excellent teacher and monitoring the match between teacher-leader and resident.
   5. Building support in the community for the new resident and the project.
   6. Participating in evaluations of the project.
   7. Advocating and providing public comments for the OPI and University system as they present to legislators, the Board of Public Education, the Board of Regents, and other interested groups.
   8. Volunteer to give testimony on the project.
   9. Offer suggestion for the next residency group of what will make it more effective.
   10. Help build this opportunity in collaboration with all the partners as this is new to Montana.

Q – Must principals and superintendents participate in the Executive Leadership Academy?
A: There is not a requirement for principals and superintendents to participate in the Executive Leadership Academy Cohort II, but it is strongly encouraged so the opportunity for school improvement and learning is not missed.

Q – How do you know districts are committed to the demonstration project?
A: Interested districts were required to complete a short google form with six questions to which the district must commit.

Q – Who are the partners in this demonstration project?
A: The partners include our national think tank that has been working on this effort since October 2021; the Educator Prep Programs in Montana, the local school districts, The Comprehensive Center 17, The Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education, and The Office of Public Instruction.

Q – How are/will the partners informed of progress?
A: The partners will be informed of the progress of the project through multiple venues:
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2022-2023 School Year

- Monthly Webinars
- Presentations
- Phone calls
- Emails
- Executive Leadership Academy
- Regular meetings with those affected

- The OPI Compass
- Field visits
- Teacher Leader Academy

Q – How often will evaluation data collection occur?
A: At least quarterly and through phone calls, webinars, surveys, emails, and visitations. Christina Linder with the Comprehensive Center 17 will be leading the evaluation.