

May, 2012

TO: State Workforce Investment Board
FROM: Governor's Office
RE: Governor's Math and Science Initiative

Program Update

Three years ago, Governor's discretionary funds were secured to continue a state initiative to promote math and science as a key to preparing a workforce capable of competing in a global economy. Key accomplishments and activities in the previous year include:

- Continued outreach and distribution of a program of classroom materials that encourage hands-on exploration of math and science through gardening. Classroom volunteers, such as master gardeners and extension agents, share their expertise.
 - Classroom materials include grow boxes, seeds, posters, lesson plans and growing instructions developed with the help of Montana gardening and agriculture experts
 - Teacher training and outreach at:
 - 21st Century Community Learning Centers Conference—targets afterschool programs
 - MEA-MFT Educator's Conference—largest annual conference for teachers
 - ServeMontana Symposium—Conference theme focused on growing communities through gardening; training and outreach to volunteers and education organizations; a math and science book service project sponsored by Target; a gardening/agriculture afterschool service project with AmeriCorps members
 - Master Gardener Celebration—outreach to annual event for Master Gardeners who volunteer to share their expertise with classrooms
 - To date, 178 schools and 50 organizations requested these classroom gardening materials. Over 6,800 students and 350 teachers were touched by the program.
- Developing a new set of math and science trading cards focused on Montana's food and agriculture industry to spark an early interest in math and science leading to emerging jobs fields.
- Continued promoting program of Roadside Geology Markers that provide innovative teaching opportunities for early childhood and K-12 classrooms. The signs are tied to career pathways by connecting volunteer scientists to future jobs in the students' communities.
 - Launched Geological Roadsigns near Lima (Tendoy Mountains), Butte (Boulder Batholith), Dillon (Beaverhead Rock), and Fort Peck (Hell Creek Formation). Coordinating launches for May 2012.
 - 64 elementary and 39 high school students introduced to the geology in their own backyard and careers in science by volunteer geology professors, research geologists, and hydrologists.
- Involvement in Montana's workgroup to help write the Next Generation Science Standards to align all states to common internationally benchmarked college and career ready standards

- Award recognition of a math and science philanthropist, a science center volunteer, a preschool volunteer, and a wildlife center volunteer team that have partnered with Montana’s school systems to enhance math and science education tied to high-demand fields.
 - Awards luncheon to publicly recognize award winners held during the ServeMontana Symposium in February.

- Coordinated the following statewide outreach events to inspire students to study math and science as a pathway to careers and promote math and science education as a policy priority for Montana:
 - Chicks In Science, Billings, MT
 - Booth at annual event at Montana State University–Billings that showcases career opportunities in math, science and technology to young girls and their families
 - Environmental Discovery Day, Helena, MT
 - Hands-on booth at event for local elementary students; state agencies design hands-on booths to demonstrate the environmental work they do
 - Reception for the Montana Learning Center at Canyon Ferry Lake
 - Connect potential business partners to this STEM education nonprofit that provides professional development to teachers and hands-on learning opportunities for students.
 - Dedicate Toston Smelter Historic Marker, Toston, MT
 - Joined high school students from Townsend and the Project for Alternative Learning in Helena to dedicate marker on history of the smelter and recent reclamation. Students were introduced to careers in the restoration economy
 - Helena High School Biology Club, Helena, MT
 - Guest speaker at the Helena High School Biology Club which meets biweekly to hear speakers from the community talk about their career paths

Future Work

- Continue outreach and distribution of classroom materials that encourage hands-on exploration of math and science through gardening.
 - Funds classroom materials and small amount for distribution
 - Funds travel and materials for workshops to train teachers and volunteers in gardening/agriculture curriculum
- Continued promoting program of Roadside Geology Markers
 - Funds travel to geologic signs to meet students and scientists and wages for coordination of events
- Continue partnerships with teachers, schools, education and nonprofit organizations that are promoting math and science education in Montana
 - Funds travel to events across state and wages for coordination of events

Budget

Funding from the Governor’s Set-aside for personnel and related expenses for the Initiative. Specifically:

\$22,296 Wages
 \$6,447 Benefits
 \$16,316 Travel & Outreach
 \$7,650 Add’l grant funding for FY 12

\$52,709 Total