

Part 3. University and Plan of Study Information

You must apply for Admission at the school you plan to attend and some schools may also require admission to their graduate program. Please check the university you plan to attend:

Carroll College MSU-Billings Univ. of Great Falls Univ. of Montana** Western MT College

University of Montana Students Please Note: You must complete all admission requirements and be accepted to the University of Montana **AND you must apply and be accepted to the special education program before you can receive a Plan of Study.

A Plan of Study listing the courses you will need to complete to obtain your special education endorsement must be developed with, and signed by, an academic advisor at the university you plan to attend. Any changes, including course substitutions, must be approved by your advisor.

Part 4. Mentor Role and Responsibilities

Agreeing to mentor an OPI candidate will require additional time and work on your part, so it is important that you have the desire, time, and expertise to honor this commitment. We ask that the district recognize your role as a mentor as a part of your professional responsibilities by giving you the necessary time and resources to serve as the best support system possible for your candidate. Only a special education teacher or a special education professional within the same district/coop will be allowed to fill the mentor role, since day-to-day contact and technical assistance with the OPI candidate is expected.

Mentor Course:

Mentors are required to attend the Montana Mentor Institute held each summer in cooperation with the OPI & MEA-MFT. The project will cover the costs of travel, food, lodging and registration fee. Tuition for renewal units and any required textbooks or other material will be the responsibility of the mentor or the school district.

Reports:

As a mentor, you will provide feedback on your candidate(s) through the completion and submission of log sheets. Each set of log sheets consist of a Plan of Contact and Progress Report form, each documenting a three month cycle. You will need to submit a set of log sheets during the months of November, February, and May through either regular mail or email. Log sheets can be downloaded from the endorsement project website at: www.msubillings.edu/COE/SECREC/OPI click on Mentor Information and scroll to bottom of page.

3-Year Deadline:

It is very important that you follow your candidate's progress toward the completion of their coursework. By signing and submitting their project application, candidates have agreed to adhere to the 3-year deadline for completing their coursework, as mandated by OPI regulations. No exceptions will be made to this 3-year rule, therefore continual progress toward the special education endorsement must be maintained.

Stipend Payment from Project:

A stipend of \$500 will be paid to the mentor by the special education endorsement project at the end of the academic year for each first year OPI candidate they have supported. Payment of the mentor stipend is contingent on completion of **both** the required mentor instruction and all Plan of Contact and Progress Report log sheets.

Stipend Payment from School District:

Mentors will also receive a \$500 stipend match from the school district for the mentoring of each candidate's first year in the project. Specifics regarding the date and method of payment need to be worked out separately between the mentor and school district since payment will come directly from their district.

Mentors Are *Not* Responsible For...

Mentors are not responsible for evaluation of candidate performance in student teaching or for their teacher evaluations required by the district. All candidates must complete the student teaching component of the project. For continuing employment purposes, the candidate will be evaluated according to the policy of the employing school district and by appropriate personnel. For student teaching purposes, the candidate will be responsible to college/university faculty supervision.



**CONTRACT of AGREEMENT
for the
OPI Special Education Endorsement Project**

I, _____ fully understand and am committed to
Applicant's Name

the following terms set forth for participation in the OPI Special Education Endorsement Project:

1) I will complete the Montana Special Education Teaching Endorsement **within 3 years** of project acceptance, as mandated by OPI regulations.

My project start date is: July 1, 2008

My project completion date is: July 1, 2011

I understand and accept that these dates must be strictly adhered to;

2) I will maintain satisfactory progress toward completion of my special education endorsement by completing a minimum of 1/3 of my required credits each year. My participation in the project may be discontinued if satisfactory progress is not maintained;

3) I will teach special education in a Montana school district for a minimum of two school years following the completion of my special education endorsement through the OPI Special Education Endorsement Project. I understand this does not guarantee me a teaching contract and is not a binding contract with the current participating school district;

4) I will immediately notify the project office of any changes in my address and/or employment status. Failure to do so may affect my status with the project;

5) I will provide proof of completion of a federal background check and fingerprints within two years prior to student teaching, as required by Montana law. This documentation will be submitted with your student teaching application.

6) I have read and understand the method of stipend reimbursement and that I will be responsible for any costs not covered by the endorsement project.

7) I have read and will comply with the 2008-2009 OPI Special Education Endorsement Project application.

Sign Here

⇒ _____

Applicant's Signature

Date

Please sign and return this agreement to the OPI Special Education Endorsement Project Office along with your completed W-9 form. A copy of your agreement will be sent to you and to your school district.