

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 20, 2012

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EDUCATION & LOCAL GOV'T IC

MARCH 23, 2012

Exhibit 3

Juneau Announces 22 Schools Receive Graduation Matters Grants Montana Making Gains on Improving the Graduation Rate

Superintendent Denise Juneau announced the award of 21 grants to 22 Montana schools to increase the number of Montana students who graduate from high school prepared for college and careers, for a total of \$150,000 to support local Graduation Matters initiatives across the state. The Office of Public Instruction was awarded \$450,000 over three years from the Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation to support community-based Graduation Matters initiatives.

Superintendent Juneau stated, "We continue to make gains on the graduation rate statewide, but we still have room for improvement." She continued, "Schools are setting high goals to improve their graduation rates and engage their entire communities in supporting student success. If these communities are successful in reaching their goals, we will be able to cut the statewide dropout rate in half by 2014."

Juneau released the latest dropout and graduation rate data from the 2010-2011 school year. In 2007, Montana established unique IDs for all students in the state and implemented a system for tracking them over time and as they move between programs, schools and districts in the state. As of 2011, Montana has four years of enrollment in its student information system, AIM, allowing OPI to use a new four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate. Montana's graduation rate has improved from 80.2% in 2010 to 82.1% in 2011. The dropout rate remained at 4.3 percent.

"Businesses, schools, families, students and non-profits are coming together across the state to talk about the future of public education in Montana," said Juneau. "The continued focus on increasing our graduation rate and improving student achievement is going to pay off in Montana for years to come."

Juneau pointed to the efforts of communities who have been focusing on improving their graduation rates with local Graduation Matters efforts. Missoula's high schools have increased their graduation rate from 84.5% in 2010 to 86.9% in 2011. Kalispell's high schools have increased their graduation rate from 73.9% in 2010 to 78.5% in 2011, and Helena increased from 75.8% in 2010 to 82.5%.

"Many of our schools spent the last year bringing their community partners together, analyzing their data and putting their plans in place, and now we can help them jumpstart their efforts with the Graduation Matters Challenge Fund. The next two years will be critical for showing how working together, we can improve the economic future of individuals and our state by graduating students with the skills they need to find a good job."

For information on the new 4-year adjusted cohort graduation rate, go to:

<http://graduationmatters.mt.gov/press>.

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GRADUATION MATTERS CHALLENGE FUND AWARDS

Existing Graduation Matters Communities:

Greater Gallatin Valley, \$10,000
Billings, \$10,000
Butte, \$10,000
Kalispell, \$10,000
Great Falls, \$10,000
Hamilton, \$10,000
Missoula, \$3,600
Townsend, \$10,000

New Graduation Matters Communities:

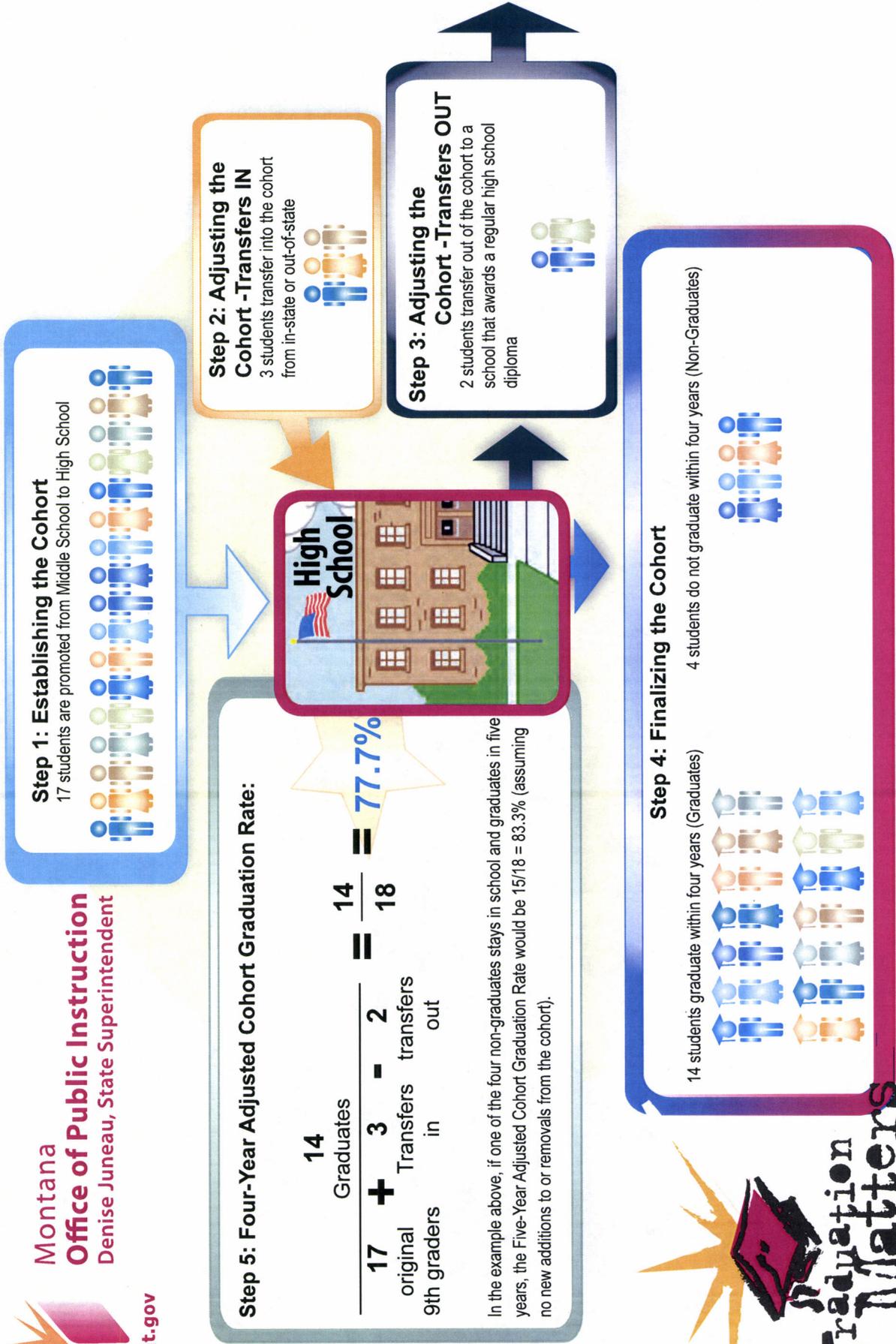
Anaconda, \$10,000
Browning, \$5,000
Corvallis, \$4,000
Miles City, \$8,600
Lewistown, \$4,000
Hardin, \$10,000
Havre, \$4,000
Libby, \$7,000
Livingston, \$4,000
Polson, \$9,950
St. Ignatius, \$10,000
Stevensville, \$9,500
Thompson Falls, \$7,000

Four - Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate Calculation Process



Montana
Office of Public Instruction
Denise Juneau, State Superintendent

opi.mt.gov



Step 5: Four-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate:

$$\frac{14 \text{ Graduates}}{17 \text{ original 9th graders} + 3 \text{ Transfers in} - 2 \text{ transfers out}} = \frac{14}{18} = 77.7\%$$

In the example above, if one of the four non-graduates stays in school and graduates in five years, the Five-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate would be 15/18 = 83.3% (assuming no new additions to or removals from the cohort).



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