



(877) COLG4ME  
[ReachHigherMontana.org](http://ReachHigherMontana.org)

TO:

FROM: Kelly Cresswell

DATE: March 27, 2018

**RE: [Reach Higher Montana wants YOU to help us forge our future work for the benefit of Montana students](#)**

As we continue our work to build and develop Reach Higher Montana, we are seeking dedicated students, parents, educators, and community members to engage and serve on the Reach Higher Montana Advisory Council. This council will provide significant input on the development of our next strategic plan, and will continue to be a sounding board and voice for our stakeholders as we work to continuously improve our services.

We are proud of the legacy of our programming – we've helped thousands of students and their families complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA); we've delivered significant funding for need-based financial aid; we've awarded hundreds of scholarships; we've helped hundreds of foster care youth prepare and fund their education; and we've worked closely with our partners in education, government, and nonprofits. However, we are always interested in learning more about the challenges and opportunities students encounter on their path to education beyond high school, and our Advisory Council is one way we gather this information.

Enclosed with this letter are two documents: an overview of our vision for the Advisory Council, and an application to express your interest in serving on the advisory council. We hope that you will consider service on the Advisory Council, as we believe your experience and knowledge would be very helpful to the continued evolution of Reach Higher Montana.

Please understand, it is your experience, insights and counsel in which we are interested. There is no financial commitment or fundraising requirement regarding your participation in this Advisory Council. The involvement of individual Montanans is critical to the success of Reach Higher Montana and the students we serve.

We are planning to hold the next meeting of the Advisory Council in Great Falls, sometime in May. Ideally, we will have our new members join us at that time. If you have questions about the work of the Advisory Council, please contact me. Applications can be returned to me at [kcresswell@ReachHigherMontana.org](mailto:kcresswell@ReachHigherMontana.org), by Friday, April 20, 2018.

I sincerely hope you'll consider applying for the Advisory Council!

## REACH HIGHER MONTANA ADVISORY COUNCIL

**Purpose:**

The Reach Higher Montana Advisory Council exists to receive constituent input on the development, design, implementation, and delivery of college access and success programming delivered to Montana students through Reach Higher Montana. The advisory council is not a governing body, and acts as an independent, unbiased sounding board for the exploration of new ventures, improvement of ongoing programming, and connections to potential partners and supporters for the further advancement of Reach Higher Montana.

**Membership:**

The advisory council comprises up to twenty-five members from across Montana with expertise in the following areas, and/or as a representative of the following constituents:

<p><b><u>EDUCATION:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Postsecondary education</b> (includes public, private, tribal, community, 2-year, and 4-year institutions)             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Financial Aid</li> <li>○ Admissions</li> <li>○ Educators</li> <li>○ Administration</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Secondary education</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ School Administrators</li> <li>○ School Counselors</li> <li>○ Educators</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b><u>STUDENTS:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● College students (attending any institution in Montana)</li> <li>● High School Students</li> </ul> <p><b><u>PARENTS:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Of current high school students</li> <li>● Of current college students</li> <li>● Of recent graduates from high school and/or college</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>PARTNERS:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Philanthropy</li> <li>● Complementary Programs</li> <li>● OCHE representatives</li> <li>● State Government (non-MUS)</li> </ul> <p><b><u>OTHER:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● MHESAC Board Members (operating in an advisory capacity)</li> <li>● SAF Board Members (operating in an advisory capacity)</li> </ul>
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**Selection:**

Members of the Reach Higher Montana advisory council will submit a resume and/or a brief application to indicate their interest in serving on the advisory council. The Executive Director of Reach Higher Montana will select the members of the advisory council, with careful and thoughtful attention to diversified economies, geographic representation, ethnicity, and gender.

**Term of Service:**

Student members will serve one-year terms on the advisory council, with the option to renew for one additional one-year term.

All other members will serve three-year terms, with a maximum of two consecutive three-year terms (six years total). To ensure continuity of the advisory council’s work, terms will be staggered, requiring that on the initial council, one-third of the non-student members will serve one-year terms; one-third of the non-student members will serve two-year terms; and one-third of the non-student members will

serve three-year terms. One-year and two-year terms will not be counted in limiting consecutive group service to two three-year terms.

**Advisory Council Expectations:**

The advisory council will meet at least twice annually, but no more than five times annually. Advisory council members are expected to:

- Attend a minimum of two meetings per year.
- Actively participate in the functioning of the advisory council.
- Be available for individual consultation to the Executive Director.

**Reach Higher Montana Commitment to Advisory Council Members:**

- We'll make good use of your time with meetings that are purposeful, efficient, and fun.
- We'll communicate between meetings to keep you apprised of our work.
- We'll listen to your perspectives, ideas, and advice.
- Your collective voice will be shared with the MHESAC Board of Directors, which governs Reach Higher Montana.
- We'll work together to continuously improve the programs and services of Reach Higher Montana.
- **Student members will receive an education award of \$500 for each year of service on the advisory council.**
- Reach Higher Montana will pay travel expenses for participation in regular meetings of the advisory council (mileage, meals, lodging).

**About Us:**

Reach Higher Montana is an initiative of the Montana Higher Education Student Assistance Corporation (MHESAC), whose mission is to guide, prepare, and support Montana students with inspiration, information, and resources for college. MHESAC is the governing body for Reach Higher Montana, as well as the primary funder.

Reach Higher Montana is staffed by employees of Student Assistance Foundation, through a management support contract.

Reach Higher Montana is headquartered in Helena, and has additional locations in Butte, Billings, Bozeman, Great Falls, Missoula, and Bigfork.



# Advisory Council Application

## Contact Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City ST Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## Affiliations – Please mark all that apply

<p><b><u>EDUCATION:</u></b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Postsecondary education</b> (includes public, private, tribal, community, 2-year, and 4-year institutions)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Financial Aid</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Admissions</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Educator</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Administration</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Other:</li> </ul> <p><b>Institution:</b></p>	<p><b><u>STUDENT:</u></b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> College student (attending any institution in Montana)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> High School Student</p> <p><b>Institution/School:</b></p> <p><b>Grade/Level:</b></p>	<p><b><u>PARTNERS:</u></b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Philanthropy</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Complementary Program</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> OCHE representative</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> State Government (non-MUS)</p> <p><b>Organization:</b></p> <p><b>Title:</b></p>
<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Secondary education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> School Administrator</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> School Counselor</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Educator</li> </ul> <p><b>School:</b></p>	<p><b><u>PARENT:</u></b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Of current high school students</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Of current college students</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Of recent graduates from high school and/or college</p> <p><b>School(s) Your Child(ren) Attend:</b></p> <p><b>Grade(s)/Level(s):</b></p>	<p><b><u>OTHER:</u></b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> MHESAC Board Member (operating in an advisory capacity)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> SAF Board Member (operating in an advisory capacity)</p>

(turn over)

**How would you describe your current level of knowledge or familiarity with Reach Higher Montana?**

**Mark the one that fits best from this list:**

- I've never heard of it
- I'm somewhat familiar
- I know quite a bit about Reach Higher Montana
- I'm extremely knowledgeable about Reach Higher Montana

**Mark all that apply from this list:**

- I (or someone close to me) used their programs and services
- I (or someone close to me) has received assistance from Reach Higher Montana
- I read their monthly newsletter
- I follow them on Facebook
- I've been to one of their events
- I've made a financial contribution to the organization
- I have volunteered at one of their events
- I work with them regularly as part of my job

**In your experience or opinion, what are the greatest two or three areas of need when it comes to preparing Montana students for postsecondary education?**

**In your experience or opinion, what do you think is working well when it comes to preparing Montana students for postsecondary education?**

**What topics do you wish you understood better when it comes to preparing Montana students for postsecondary education?**

**Please return your completed application to:**

**Kelly Cresswell, Executive Director  
Reach Higher Montana  
PO Box 1287  
Helena MT 59624**

**Or: [kresswell@ReachHigherMontana.org](mailto:kresswell@ReachHigherMontana.org)**