

## RMC MASTER OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAM: “A MODEL FOR THE STATE AND REGION”

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BILLINGS – The Rocky Mountain College Master of Educational Leadership Program received high marks after a review of the program by the Montana Office of Public Instruction this month. At the conclusion of the review, the review team described the RMC Master of Educational Leadership Program as a “model for the state and region.”

The program also received several commendations.

Dr. Stevie Schmitz, Rocky Mountain College director of educational leadership and distance learning elementary education; Dr. Jo Swain, assistant professor of elementary education; and Christine Unquera, assistant director of educational leadership and distance learning education are primarily responsible for the Master of Educational Leadership Program receiving provisional accreditation in 2008 from the Board of Public Education and the Montana Office of Public Instruction.

As is always the case, this preliminary approval is followed with a focused visit from the Office of Public Instruction to review the program and provide feedback from the accreditation team. The visit included conversations with RMC’s administrative team, graduates of the program, members of the advisory committee, supervisors and mentors. The visit was held on campus April 5 – 7, 2010. The committee included administrators from around the state as well as a liaison from the Office of Public Instruction.

“We are very proud of what Stevie and Jo have accomplished,” said Anthony Piltz, RMC academic vice president. “This is an exceptional program.”

Commendations included praise for the research and evidence-based foundation for the development of the program, its leadership, academic excellence, cohort structure, and the two levels of impact that the program is providing -- the development of new leaders and the re-invigoration of veterans who work with the program.

"This team effort is rewarded by this praise, but more so by the success of our graduates," said Dr. Schmitz.

All of the criteria for accreditation were met and several commendations were given as well. An official written report is expected in 30 days.

The RMC Master of Educational Leadership is designed to help fill the increasing vacancies in school administration across the state and nationwide. This is another degree not offered anywhere else in eastern Montana except at RMC. The new RMC master's degree provides for an accelerated 11-month program of study, with online, face-to-face, and interactive television instruction. The program is modeled on the Effective Schools Research, developed by Dr. Larry Lezotte as well as the state and national standards for school administration. The program covers theory to practice. Besides courses offered at a distance, program participants will have mentors at their school location. The program covers K-12 administration, so successful graduates will be qualified to fill a wide range of positions in elementary and high school. After program completion, students will be able to apply for licensure as a principal or superintendent.

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