

2024-2025

Writing Coaches of Montana Annual Report



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About Writing Coaches of Montana

Since its inception in 1995, Writing Coaches of Montana (WCM) has grown from an on-site, drop-in writing center in a single, Missoula school, to a classroom-based, teacher-driven program across Western Montana. We serve Flathead, Missoula, and Ravalli counties.

At the invitation of teachers, trained coaches meet individually with students in the classroom. Coaches work with students in grades 4-12 across disciplines, including science, social studies, and language arts. WCM uses individualized approaches which help students deepen their critical thinking and learn how to develop their writing and revision process.



Meet Our Team



BOARD

WCM is led by a diverse group of Montana community members from across Western Montana, with backgrounds in education, writing, program management, and beyond. Find more specifics about board members [here](#).



STAFF

Our staff is made up of Executive Director, Shan Rao; Flathead Coordinator, Jeanne Wdowin; and Missoula/Ravalli Coordinator, Becca Escobedo. Find more information about our staff [here](#).



VOLUNTEER COACHES

WCM's programming is delivered by hundreds of generous local volunteer coaches across Flathead, Missoula, and Ravalli counties. Volunteers are community members from all walks of life who have been trained in motivational interviewing techniques which result in maintaining each student's ownership of the writing and learning process.

Vision And Mission



Vision

We envision that all Montana students think critically and communicate effectively through writing.

Mission

To help Montana students grow as confident, competent writers, WCM mentors students and supports teachers through trained community volunteers.

Values

- **Collaboration:** We partner with educators, community members, and fellow organizations to implement our mission.
- **Community:** We foster a sense of community among all of our partners and support community involvement in education.
- **Lifelong Learning:** We embrace a growth mindset, with coaches and students learning together throughout their lifetimes.
- **Respect:** We promote mutual respect between learners of all ages and support diverse, equitable, and inclusive learning for all.

2024-2025 Impact

2738 STUDENTS SERVED IN 19 SCHOOLS

Flathead: Columbia Falls HS, Edgerton Elementary, Evergreen Jr High, Kalispell MS, Muldown Elementary, Somers MS, Whitefish HS, Whitefish MS

Missoula: Big Sky HS, CS Porter MS, Hellgate HS, Potomac Elementary, Seeley-Swan HS, Sentinel HS, Target Range

Ravalli: Corvallis HS, Hamilton HS, Florence-Carlton HS, Stevensville MS



WRITING ACROSS DISCIPLINES

Coaches supported students in science, government, social studies, language arts, and humanities classes, partnering with 42 teachers.

TEACHER RECOMMENDED

100% of teacher survey respondents reported that they would recommend WCM to fellow educators.



1121 HOURS VOLUNTEERED

Over 100 local community members donated over 1,121 hours working with students in 3,365 sessions.

That equates to \$35,747 of in-kind labor!



| Testimonials

“The most helpful thing was having someone else read [my paper] to find the spots where I could expand on my thoughts that didn't exactly make sense to others. Generally, having more perspective improved my story.”

– Flathead County student

“Every year, I count on Writing Coaches of Montana to assist me in providing top-notch, individualized writing instruction to students. I can carve out five to seven minutes to conference with individual students on an essay, but this is just not enough for most writers. With the help of writing coaches, my students get that initial visit with me to work on development of basic structural elements such as their thesis, but then they get to meet with a coach twice over two weeks to review all other aspects of their writing. This additional time, between thirty minutes to an hour, is the critical difference in their growth and confidence as a writer.”

– Missoula County teacher

“I told [the student] that my time spent with her was a real gift to me. She thanked me so sincerely I nearly cried with joy. What a blessing our time with these young people is. I LOVE working with students to watch how their thoughts can develop.”

– Ravalli County coach



Research-Backed

Writing Coaches of Montana conducted a study with 10th grade students at Columbia Falls High School, with all students completing the same assignment. A team of community members was then trained on a rubric developed by our contracted research expert to anonymously score first and final drafts of each essay.

Students who received one coaching session experienced 2.5 times the growth of students who did not receive coaching.

On a 4-point scale, students who were coached scored 11% higher than students who were not coached.

We are deeply grateful to Whitefish Community Foundation for providing funding for this project.



Thank You!

WCM impacts thousands of students each year thanks to the generosity of our funders and donors.

Grantors

- Annie Maclay
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Contact us!



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We look forward to continuing and growing
our impact on Montana students in the
2025–2026 school year!



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Writing Coaches of Montana



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