

2023-2024

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 center in a single, Missoula school, to a classroom-based, teacher-driven program across western Montana. Historically, we serve Flathead, Missoula, and Ravalli counties. We expect WCM's impact to grow as the organization aims to expand into a state-wide organization.

At the invitation of teachers, trained coaches meet individually with every student in the classroom. Coaches work with students in grades 4-12 across disciplines. WCM uses communication techniques which help students deepen their critical thinking and learn how to develop their writing and revision process.



Meat Our Team

BOARD

WCM is led by a diverse group of Montana community members with the skills and experience to lead the organization into a thriving future. Board members include (from left): Matt Bell, Stefan Olson, Jay Shaver, Jason Kolberg, Shelley Jared, Beverly Chin. Not pictured: Rita Braun, Jim Hogan, Neil Massey. Find more specifics about board member bios [here](#).



STAFF

WCM staff includes (from left): Intern, Lucille Vanek. Executive Director, Cassie Sheets, Missoula/Ravalli Coordinator, Kat Jackson, and Flathead Coordinator, Jeanne Wdowin. Composed of three generations of educators and writers, our staff are equipped to infuse WCM programming with effective, innovative, and effective practices. Bios can be found [here](#).



VOLUNTEER COACHES

WCM's programming is delivered by hundreds of generous local volunteer coaches across Flathead, Missoula, & Ravalli counties. Volunteers are not necessarily writing experts; instead, they are caring 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, Mission, Values

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 Stats

2,625 STUDENTS SERVED

Flathead: Glacier HS, Muldown Elementary, Edgerton Elementary,
Whitefish HS, Whitefish MS, Kalispell MS
Missoula: Hellgate HS, Target Range School, Sentinel HS,
CS Porter MS, Big Sky HS
Ravalli: Florence-Carlton MS, Florence-Carlton HS, Hamilton HS,
Corvallis HS



WRITING ACROSS DISCIPLINES

Coaches supported students in government, social studies,
language arts, and humanities classes,
partnering with **33 teachers**.
For the first time, coaches worked with an entire class of
English Language Learners!



TEACHER RECOMMENDED

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



OVER 1,000 HOURS VOLUNTEERED

Hundreds of local community members donated over 1,000
hours working with students in **3,148 sessions**.
That equates to **\$15,920** of in-kind labor!





Making a Difference

“I found it really cool how she helped me re-write some words to make it flow better, but also the main thing was she respected me as the writer and let me choose some parts I didn't want to change and she listened to all of my ideas. After I was done, all the compliments just made me feel good.”

-Missoula student

"I love the writing coaches organization and all they've done for my students. It is wonderful to watch my teenage students light up as they share their writing with someone who really listens to them and hears their intent with respect and enthusiasm. In a hectic world, the writing coaches give space for real life connections and mentoring. No matter their skill level or situation, my students leave the interaction with a confidence that nothing else could replicate."

-Flathead teacher

“The advantage of volunteer work is that I have given myself permission to only give my time to those activities that bring me joy. I continue to be delighted, surprised, challenged and amazed by the teachers, students and coaches I have met while volunteering with WCM. Acknowledging and naming emotions and opinions, then processing them into words and stories is a life skill that will benefit the students in their personal and professional lives.

-Ravalli coach

Thank you!

WCM impacts thousands of students each year because of the generosity of our donors and grantors.

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**We look forward to continuing WCM's positive
impact on Montana students next year!**