

Dr. Angela McLean serves as the Director of American Indian and Minority Achievement and K–12 Partnerships at the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education for the Montana University System. She leads systemwide efforts that expand access, equity, and student success, contributing to a 30% increase in American Indian student enrollment. She also directs major workforce-aligned efforts including the MUS Education Design Lab employer designed micro-pathway initiative and Montana’s Future at Work in partnership with MUS campuses and K-12 schools.

McLean began her career in 1994 teaching junior high and high school in Arlee, Montana on the Flathead Indian Reservation. From 1997-2014, McLean taught at Anaconda High School in Anaconda, Montana where she also partnered with Highlands College to teach dual enrollment. While in Anaconda, her innovative instructional practices earned national recognition through the prestigious Milken Educator Award. Her classroom experience continues to shape her leadership philosophy to one grounded in shared governance, transparency, and strong partnerships with faculty, staff, students, and community stakeholders.

Her leadership expanded into statewide education governance when she served as Vice Chair of the Montana Board of Public Education and later became the first classroom teacher to chair the Montana University System Board of Regents. In these roles, she advanced policies that strengthened student college access pathways, expanded dual enrollment opportunities, and helped lead a tuition freeze across Montana University System campuses. Her governance experience reflects strong fiscal stewardship, consensus-building, and a sophisticated understanding of complex higher education and K-12 systems.

McLean served as Montana’s 31st Lieutenant Governor, where she championed initiatives connecting education, workforce development, and economic vitality. As an inaugural Hunt-Kean Leadership Fellow, along with other national leaders, she explored emerging P–20 education priorities, reinforcing her commitment to aligning education with community and employer needs.

In the 2022-23 academic year, in addition to her current role, McLean served as the Interim Director of Bitterroot College. In this role, McLean stabilized operations while also working to grow fall to spring enrollment by 23%. McLean’s tenure at Bitterroot renewed institutional momentum and set the campus on a path toward continued enrollment growth.

McLean received a Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education from Western Montana College (1994), a Master of Arts in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Montana (2000); and a Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership from Montana State University (2021).

McLean and her husband, Mike, recently celebrated their 30th wedding anniversary. Together, they have two children, Colin and Ellen. Colin is a University of Montana graduate and Ellen is matriculating at Montana State University. McLean enjoys spending time with her family as well as hiking and camping.

Dr. Angela McLean
Olympic College Presidential Finalist