Please note, there will not be a Wednesday Reader for next week, November 22, as I will be out all next week beginning at Noon on Friday for the Thanksgiving holiday. Have a happy Turkey Day. ~Eric

AWS K-12 Cyber Grant Program

Recognizing the need for the K12 community to enhance cybersecurity protection against intrusion, ransomware attacks, and data breaches, AWS created a non-competitive K12 Cyber Grant Program and is investing $20 million in AWS promotional credits for new and existing customers.

The grant is open to K12 public school districts, regional education service agencies (ESAs), and state departments of education (DOEs) to implement cloud-based cybersecurity solutions to increase their security posture. Grant awards take into consideration the type of entity, student enrollment for districts, and students supported (ESAs and DOEs).

In addition to the grant funding, AWS has committed to upskilling staff through no-cost training, and providing no-cost cyber incident response assistance to AWS K12 customers in the event of a cyberattack.

Click here for complete details and to apply. The application deadline is December 31, 2023.

NGPF Announces Registration is Now Open for Cohort #39 Certification Courses

Next Gen Personal Finance (NGPF) announces the opening of registration for Cohort #39 Certification courses. Cohort #39 will be offered November 27-December 12 with an exam window from December 15-23. This time, NGPF is offering both live and on-demand courses for the accelerated three-week format.

Cohort #39 will offer three (3) live courses and two (2) on-demand courses. The live course options include

--Consumer Skills: Monday & Wednesday, 3-5 pm (MST);
--Cryptocurrency Basics: Tuesday & Thursday, 3-5 pm (MST);
--Psychology of Money: Tuesday & Thursday, 5-7 pm (MST);

and the on-demand options are Taxes and Advanced Investing (by invitation only for people who have passed Investing).

How does the on-demand format work? There will be four self-paced modules that will take two hours to complete and one self-paced module that will take one hour to complete. There is not a live instructor for the on-demand modules nor a review session.

All five modules will be made available on November 27 and will need to be completed by December 13.

Certification Courses are NGPF's most in-depth professional development format. Each course combines nine hours of live virtual sessions focused on a core personal finance content area with a one-hour assessment exam. BONUS: Complete six certification courses and earn NGPF Distinguished Educator status.

If you plan to participate in Cohort #39, be sure to work with your school/district to receive OPI Renewal Units for hours completed.

New Hour of Code Activities that Students Will Love from Code.org

Are you ready? Computer Science Education Week is in less than a month — and it's the perfect time to plan your Hour of Code event. Code.org hopes you're excited and have registered your classroom or school event with Code.org.

This year, Code.org is taking Hour of Code to new heights with "Hour of Code: Creativity with AI." As usual, their fantastic teacher review board has meticulously tested and evaluated over 100 new Hour of Code activities submitted this year—many teaching AI concepts. Check out a few of their favorites and start planning your Computer Science Education Week.

Do not forget, you can do an Hour of Code anywhere: at home, in class, or with your whole school. U.S. schools can register a whole-school Hour of Code event and receive an awesome new swag kit. Let's get ready for the coolest Hour of Code ever.

Encourage High School Seniors to Apply for the Cutler-Bell Prize

The Computer Science Teachers Association (CSTA) has opened applications for the 2023-2024 Cutler-Bell Application, which looks to recognize up to four high school senior students residing in the US for their projects in computer science.

Winners will receive a $10,000 prize to go to their college/university of choice.

Applications are due by January 19, 2023.

Share the application with your students. Have questions about the award? Join the CSTA Awards committee for one of their three Q&A sessions about the award. These sessions are open to students as well.

Upcoming Opportunities from the Montana Chamber Foundation

The Prospects**:** The Prospects has been growing and growing and an opportunity for students across the state to win $75,000 in cash, scholarships and prizes. Get in touch with Tiana or James to come pitch to your classes or drop in on a virtual visit. Additional details are posted below and check out the new categories for this year's competition.

Empowered: There is an amazing group of Montana educators who use Empowered's Principles, Markets, and Mindset in so many ways in their classrooms and beyond. If you, or an educator you know, want to create a free account here is the link. Please reach out if you have questions about all the tools and resources Empowered has to offer.

National Civics Bee: Please pass this on to any middle school educator looking to solve community problems using civics. The Montana Chamber Foundation is taking on the National Civics Bee Montana State Finals. Kids write a 500-word essay and have a chance to win $1,000, $500, or $250 for trying to solve problems in their communities. More info and a teachers guide to doing this a project in your class are here. The winner from Montana will get a paid trip to Washington, DC in the fall to represent Montana.

List of Course Codes Available for Economics/Financial Literacy Graduation Requirement

The Montana Office of Public Instruction has officially posted a listing of course codes for courses which can be used to meet the new, upcoming, Economics/Financial Literacy graduation requirement. The listing of courses is posted on the School Accreditation page of the OPI website under the FY2023 Accreditation Process menu.

This list does include the same listing of course codes previously shared within the Wednesday Reader and at the Montana BPA Fall Leadership Summit and at the MBEA Business Meeting held during the Montana ACTE Fall Institute 2023.

The new requirement will go into effect July 1, 2025 and does mean beginning with the Class of 2026, students will need to have taken at least one-half credit of Economics/Financial Literacy coursework during their grades 9-12 coursework.

The listing of the new state graduation requirements with the new Civics/Government and Economics/Financial Literacy requirement is available here.

4 Great Resources to Add to Your Curriculum Took Kits

Below are links to four great online and free resources if you are looking for some new ideas and/or resources for use with your students.

Texas Tech Curriculum Center for Family & Consumer Sciences Rubrics: This site contains a collection of rubrics you can download for free and adapt for your own use. While the site is from the Texas Tech Curriculum Center for Family and Consumer Sciences, the rubrics are not specific to the Family & Consumer Sciences curriculum. Some of the rubrics include PowerPoint Presentation, Class Participation, Role Play/Skit, Group Project, and Visual Display. The site provides 32 different rubrics. All the rubrics can be downloaded and opened in Word/Google Docs.

Kansas Center for CTE: The KCCTE site provides one of the most unique websites for teacher resources provided at no cost to CTE instructors. The site includes educational resources for best lab practices, classroom management tips, lab safety reports, learning strategies, lesson plans, student activities, student assessments, and rubric templates. Click the Visit the KCCTE Resource Library link to start exploring. You will need to create a free account to download resources.

Illinois State Board of Education, CTE Curriculum Resources: This site contains curriculum resources which were created to provide additional support for CTE teachers. You will find resources broken out in modules and each module will have E-Units, Lesson Plans and Presentations. You can customize these resources to fit your needs. Business Education resources are listed under Finance and Business Services and are grouped under Accounting; Business, Marketing, and Computer Education; Paralegal Services; Video Game Programming; and WEB and APP Development categories.

The Wharton School Global Youth Program: From the University of Pennsylvania's college of business, Wharton Schook, this site contains more than 400 free lesson plans developed by educators covering the full scope of business and finance topics, including accounting, career development, communication, computation, economics, entrepreneurship, information technology, international business, management, and personal finance. The lesson plans are organized by the subject areas of the National Standards for Business Education. Established as the first collegiate business school in 1881, Wharton played a crucial role in transforming the study of business from a trade to a rigorous and respected profession. Explore more resources from Wharton School here.

Are You Ready for a Cyber Chase?

Join the Computer Science Teachers Association(CSTA) us on Thursday, November 9 from 5-6 pm (MST) for Cyber Chase—Cybersecurity Education through Gamification where they will discuss teaching and learning cyber security through gamification. Cyber Legends and Minecraft Education are two methods used to teach cyber security and cyber safety concepts through gamification.

Teachers will leave from this event with knowledge of different resources that can be utilized to teach

cyber security or serve as supplementary to what is already happening in the cyber security classroom. Click here to register for the webinar.

Announcing the Theme for Hour of Code, December 4-10, 2023

In a year abuzz with exciting new technology, Code.org is thrilled to announce this year's Hour of Code theme: Creativity with AI. This year's Hour of Code theme offers an exciting opportunity for both educators and students to delve into the world of coding.

Beyond just the thrill of programming, teachers and students are also encouraged to dedicate an hour to learning about Artificial Intelligence (AI) and its potential in education through responsible integration within classrooms. Stay tuned for more updates, including fun activities, videos, and resources to help all Hour of Code organizers empower their students to get creative with AI.

This year's Hour of Code provides an excellent opportunity for you to help teachers bring AI into the classroom in a safe way. The visibility around AI provides a unique, energizing moment for teachers and students to try out new coding activities and insightful videos that showcase the opportunities of AI.

Interested in 6-12 professional learning from AVID/Code.org in 2024? Stay tuned for the launch of the application during CS Education week in December.

International Coding Competition 2023 (FREE & Online)

Join the world's largest coding competition for students from Codementum, December 1-15, 2023.

Hour of Code kicks off during Computer Science Education Week each year when teachers around the globe choose fun activities for students to learn about computer science and programming. Codementum has decided to run a fun and exciting competition during this week.

Codementum wants to raise awareness for coding education by organizing coding competitions for all grade levels across the World. Take your place in this fun and award-winning adventure with your school.

Get your classroom ready in just a few steps. Allow your students to easily participate in the competition.

Rules and Details:

--The competition will be held online throughout the World (Primary/Upper Elementary & Secondary/Middle School & High School), December 1-15.
--Classes will compete in the competition. Classes will have a minimum of 8 and a maximum of 60 students.
--The competition will be held through the Codementum Studio project, where they provide gamified coding training.
--Challenges will consist of Basic coding knowledge, Repeat loops, Variables, and Arrays.
--Awards will be given separately for each category (Primary/Upper Elementary & Secondary/Middle School & High School), with awards for top three classes in each category.
--The class that collects the most stars by completing 20 Challenges in the shortest amount of time will be the winner.

Join now at codementum.com/hour-of-code.

Montana State CTE/VoEd Funding Allocations for 2023-2024 Now Posted

The State CTE/VoEd funding allocations for the 2023-2024 school year are posted; the funds will be released to schools November 1. The State CTE/VoEd funding final allocations are generated based on the data entered in TEAMS (Terms of Employment, Accreditation, and Master Schedule) for the prior 2022-2023 school year.

The State CTE/VoEd funding allocations include funds for student enrollment within CTE program area courses and funds for having an active Career & Technical Student Organization (CTSO).

The CTE tab in TEAMS was made available last March and districts were asked to complete a few additional items on the tab and review the details carefully to make sure the data was accurate.

The 2024 Final VoEd Payment Detail by Legal Entity report can be found on the CTE page of the OPI website under the Funding menu.

CSEdWeek Event for Montana Teachers from Tynker

Tynker is offering an amazing free event for Montana K12 teachers and students for Computer Science Education Week, December 4-8. The event is called My Favorite Word, and it is a collaboration between Tynker and the Scripps National Spelling Bee. Their previous projects with World Cup Soccer and NASA were amazing, and this adds to the excitement of Hour of Code and integrates coding with literacy.

First, Join the FREE Web Professional Development for Montana Teachers. In this FREE 40-minute webinar, explore Tynker's brand-new collaborative coding experience that lets students apply their creativity and coding skills to the English language. In this webinar, educators will design amazing learning experiences around the Scripps National Spelling Bee My Favorite Word Projects and discover more CSEdWeek activities.

--Register Here: gotyn.kr/HOCTrain23
--Dates: Various, November 9-30
--Time: Various
--Recorded? Yes, for all registrants

Second, Add CodeLab LIVE for Montana to Your Calendar. Like last year's Coding Cup events, Tynker broadcasts LIVE webcasts called CodeLab: a live learning show for students, hosted by Tynker Teachers, which includes a LIVE walk-through of the Coding Game/Activity during CSEdWeek.

--Register Here: evt.to/asaeegghw
--Date: December 6
--Time: 9:00 am (MST)
--Recorded? Yes, for all registrants

Please join Tynker for this amazing opportunity.

Hawaii ACTE Invites You to Join Them for the ACTE Region V 2024 Conference

The Hawaii Association for Career & Technical Education is hosting the ACTE Region V 2024 Conference in Honolulu, April 9-12, at the Ala Moana Hotel in downtown Waikiki.

Registration for the conference is now open and can be completed online. The early-bird registration rate is $475 which includes tour options for Wednesday, April 10; breakfast each morning Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday; lunch on Wednesday; and receptions Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. The

early-bird registration rate ends February 1, 2024.

If the 2024 conference is your first time attending an ACTE Region V conference, apply for a First Timer's stipend of $450.

Rooms can be booked at the Ala Moana Hotel at the conference rate of $169 or $189 depending on tower selected.

To help with travel planning, a Schedule At-a-Glance is available along with a letter to help justify your attendance at the conference.

To be part of the conference program, submit a Call for Presentation to present a session. Calls for Presentations are due February 1, 2024.

Register Today for the WBEA 2024 Conference in Eugene, Oregon in February

The Oregon Business Education Association invites you to this year's Western Business Education Association's Conference to be held in Eugene, Oregon, February 15-18, 2024. The conference committee has been busy at work and continues to do so to provide educators with high-quality professional development in Personal Finance, Economics, Marketing, Accounting, Computer Science, Entrepreneurship, and more.

Reasons to attend: Dynamic speakers, breakout sessions, viticulture experience, certification workshops, networking, and vendors.

Registration for the WBEA 2024 Conference is now open and can be online with a NBEA-member early bird rate of $375.00 if paid by January 1, 2024. After January 1, 2024, the NBEA-member early bird rate increases to $425.00.

Rooms can be reserved at The Graduate Hotel online at a conference rate of $159.00 plus tax/fees.

Interested in presenting a breakout session? The Call for Presentations can be submitted online and are due December 1, 2023.

For travel planning, a conference overview and schedule is available.

Save the Date for the WBEA 2025 Wild Card Conference, *Path to Collaboration and Discovery*, February 14-16, 2025, at the DoubleTree by Hilton in Billings, Montana.

The Prospects 2024 is Now Open—A High School & Middle School Business Plan & Pitch Competition

The Montana Chamber Foundation is excited to announce the 2024 edition of The Prospects, an entrepreneurship competition. With over $75,000 in cash, prizes, and scholarships available, this is a great opportunity to get your students' ideas exposed to business leaders in Montana.

Tiana Yates (tiana@montanachamber.com), the Montana Chamber Empowered Coordinator, will be your main contact for this year's competition. You do not have to be teaching Empowered to participate in the contest.

The Prospects includes both a high school and a middle school division. The Fall competition is open now with submissions being accepted beginning December 1, 2023. Submission will be judged as they are submitted with finalists being announced on February 1, March 1, and April 1. The 2024 Virtual

Awards Ceremony will be held April 24, 2024.

Key Dates for The Prospects 2024

--December 1: First Submission Date
--February 1, March 1, & April 1: Advancements Announced
--March 15: Final Submission Date
--April 25: Virtual Awards Show
--May 19-21: In-person competition in Bozeman for the Grand Champion prize

The Prospects categories for the High School level include

Existing Business Idea: Any high school students already running their own small business. Pitch your business and how you intend to grow and sustain it moving forward.

New Business Idea: Do you have the next big thing? We want high school students to reach for stars and come up with the next amazing, new idea.

Hack My State: Take time to help us come up with solutions for one of our state's biggest concerns right now, Childcare. Come up with a solution that could help solve the problem for finding childcare all across Montana.

School Enterprise: Does your school, class or club run a business? If so, tell us why it exists and ways to improve or expand to benefit your school.

At the Middle School level, the Junior Prospects competition categories include

Design Challenge (6th grade only): 6th graders will be tasked to combine three items and let their creativity shine. Create the next big thing and help innovate Montana.

Hack My School (7th & 8th grade): Let's be solution makers. We want you to take a deep dive into your school and come up with a realistic and attainable solution to make your school better for everyone.

Vacant Lot (7th & 8th grade): Like Hack My School, but we want you to look at your community to be the next generation of change makers. Look at the vacant lots, existing buildings, and other areas of your community and pitch to us your solution to make your hometown better.

Existing Business Idea (6th-8th grade): Any middle school students already running their own small business. Pitch your business and how you intend to grow and sustain it moving forward.

Eligibility: Any of Montana's high school and middle school students are encouraged to submit their innovative ideas and solutions or enter their existing businesses.

Submissions: Pitch Video (2 minutes or less), Business Summary (1,000 words max.), a Waiver Form signed by an Educator and/or Parent or Guardian, and a completed W-9 Form.

Complete contest and submission details can be found on The Prospects page of the Montana Chamber Foundation website.

For questions, please contact Tiana Yates at tiana@montanachamber.com.

National Cybersecurity Teaching Academy (NCTA) Application Re-opened

The National Cybersecurity Teaching Academy (NCTA) is able to support tuition and fees for qualified applicants pursuing a 12-18 credit hour graduate certificate in cybersecurity education. The NCTA graduate certificate for high school teachers includes coursework on teaching cybersecurity, foundations of cybersecurity, and advanced cybersecurity topics.

Is the NCTA graduate certificate the right fit for you? The NCTA program is for secondary education teachers who:

--are teaching cybersecurity in the high school classroom, or
--have concrete plans to teach cybersecurity in the near future,
--have plans to build a robust cybersecurity program at their school, and
--can dedicate two summers to rigorous, synchronous and asynchronous graduate level coursework in cybersecurity.

Ready to apply? You will need to upload:

--a copy of your cybersecurity course syllabus (if you are currently teaching cybersecurity),
--a letter of support from your administration (someone who can speak to the school's commitment to continue offering or begin offering cybersecurity at your school).
--a copy of your college transcripts.

The NCTA application deadline is November 15, 2023. Questions? Contact melissa.dark@darkenterprisesinc.com.

Montana Perkins State Plan Review Survey

The Carl D. Perkins Act is federal legislation that provides funding for the specific purpose of developing career and technical education training and employability skills for secondary (high school) and postsecondary (college) students.

The State of Montana is asking you for your help in developing the state's vision and goals for career and technical education and workforce training. This survey will take five minutes or less to complete.

The deadline for taking this survey is February 1, 2024. Please share this survey widely with friends, family, colleagues, classmates, etc.

Free Robotics & Career Pathways Presentation

Allow Montana State University's robotics and gaming professor, Hunter Lloyd, to share his circuitous path to robotics with your students (for free!).

"How to Train Your Robot" is a hilarious presentation (on the side he's a stand-up comedian—no joke!) with his two robots, Looney and Ocean, that is well suited to the whole school, and is adaptable to all grade levels. It isn't strictly a STEM presentation, although it does check that box and could certainly be combined with a STEM day or career day event.

His presentations can be customized to your schedule, but are roughly 50 minutes.

If you're interested in hosting Hunter and his robots for a fun, free, engaging school assembly, please reach out to Keri Hallau, keri.hallau@montana.edu.

Accounting Opportunities Experience—Request a CPA for Your Classroom

November is "Certified Public Accountants Month" in Montana—proclaimed in 2022 by the Governor (and in the works for 2023)—and this is the perfect opportunity to have one of their members come speak with your students or club.

Accounting Opportunities Experience is a collaboration between state CPA societies and the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) to raise awareness of accounting career opportunities among high school students.

As the accounting profession is rapidly evolving, do not miss the chance to hear from an accounting professional who will share their real-world experience with your students. Once requested, the Montana Society of CPAs will match your classroom up with one of our CPA members.

Presentation options include
--In-Person
--Virtual Live
--On-Demand

To request a CPA for your classroom or student organization, complete the Request a CPA form or call Erinn Donnell, Director of Marketing and Communication, at 406.442.7301 for more information.

Fun Facts & Trivia

Denali National Park and Preserve is located in southcentral Alaska, approximately 240 miles north of Anchorage and 125 miles south of Fairbanks.

Denali National Park and Preserve is six million acres large.

The park and preserve is larger than the State of Massachusetts.

Denali National Park and Preserve exemplifies interior Alaska's character as one of the world's last great frontiers for wilderness adventure.

Denali National Park and Preserve is managed as three distinct units—Denali Wilderness, Denali National Park additions, and Denali National Preserve.

The park was originally established to protect its large mammals, not because of majestic Mount McKinley, or Denali.

Charles Sheldon conceived the plan to conserve the region as a national park.

Naturalist, hunter, and conservationist, Sheldon first traveled to the area in 1906 and again in 1907 with a packer and guide named Harry Karstens.

Karstens later made the first ascent of Mt. McKinley's south peak and would serve as the park's first superintendent.

Sheldon devoted much of his 1907 travels to studying boundaries for the proposed national park that would include territories suitable for a game refuge.

When Sheldon returned to the East in 1908, the Game Committee of the Boone and Crockett Club, of which he was chairman, launched the campaign to establish a national park.

Largely due to these efforts, Mount McKinley National Park was established in 1917.

The area's population of Dall sheep and other wildlife were now legislatively protected; however, Mount McKinley/Denali itself was not wholly included within the boundaries.

Denali is the tallest mountain in North America at a towering 20,310 feet tall.

The name of the highest mountain in North America became a subject of dispute in 1975, when the Alaska Legislature asked the U.S. federal government to officially change its name from "Mount McKinley" to "Denali".

The mountain had been unofficially named Mount McKinley in 1896 by a gold prospector, and officially by the federal government in 1917 to commemorate William McKinley, who was President of the United States from 1897 until his assassination in 1901.

The name *Denali* is based on the Koyukon name of the mountain, *Deenaalee* ('the high one').

The Koyukon are a people of Alaskan Athabaskans settling in the area north of the mountain.

Alaska in 1975 requested that the mountain be officially recognized as Denali, as it was still the common name used in the state.

Attempts by the Alaskan state government to have Mount McKinley's name changed by the federal government were blocked by members of the congressional delegation from Ohio, the home state of the mountain's presidential namesake.

In August 2015, Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell announced that the name would officially be changed in all federal documents.

While on an Alaskan visit in the first week of September 2015, President Barack Obama announced the renaming of the mountain.

Denali is the park so nice, the government made it twice—the Alaska Native Interests Land Conservation Act in 1980 created Alaska's eight national parks, but Denali was initially founded as Mount McKinley National Park on February 26, 1917.

Unlike the other national parks in Alaska, Denali used to be much smaller as the park was established to protect Dall sheep, and the Alaska Native Interests Land Conservation Act significantly increased the size of the park.

Denali is so tall that with clear weather you can see the mountain from all over Anchorage, including the Anchorage International Airport or Earthquake Park in Anchorage.

You can also catch glimpses of the monstrous mountain at the Reflection Pond at Wonder Lake and the University of Alaska campus overlook in Fairbanks.

The wood frog, which was once proposed as the official amphibian of New York, is the only amphibian that naturally resides in Denali National Park.

These frogs are fun and fascinating to researchers and visitors alike because the wood frog freezes itself into a cryogenic state in wintertime.

The frog's heart stops beating, and lungs cease pumping until the frog thaws in the spring; afterward, they continue along as if winter never existed.

Located just 200 miles south of the Arctic Circle, Denali is the coldest and stormiest of the seven summits as the other six are close enough to the equator to escape the extreme cold, snow, and wind which regularly impact Denali.

The annual snowfall at park headquarters is 81 inches, while the town of Talkeetna which lies south of Denali's border, receives 120 inches of snow annually.

Denali National Park and Preserve headquarters, a record high temperature of 91°F was recorded on June 22, 1991, and a record low of -54°F was recorded on February 5, 1999.

Issues of the Wednesday Reader are archived on the Montana Business Education Association (MBEA) website at www.mbea.info. The Wednesday Readers are under the Newsletter section and listed most recent first.

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Learning that works for Montana
CTE

"You don't make decisions because they are easy; you don't make them because they are cheap; you don't make them because they're popular; you make them because they're right." ~Rev. Theodore Hesburgh