Grant Funding Available from CodeMontana

CodeMontana has funding available for teachers who are working directly with young women in classes or projects involving STEM education. There are 10 grants of up to $500 each.

Interested teachers must submit the following information via email:

1. Name of Teacher
2. Name of School
3. Number of female students enrolled/involved in project
4. Short description of project(s)

Please send your submissions to getcoding@codemontana.org with the subject line STEM grant project.

Deadline for submissions is Sunday, March 15.

CTE Spring Data Collection For Perkins Funding Now Open

The Career and Technical Education (CTE) Spring Data Collection began March 1, 2015 and ends April 30, 2015. This AIM collection asks schools to identify all 12th grade high school students who were enrolled at any point during the current 2014-2015 school year who meet the definition of a CTE Concentrator.

CTE Concentrators are 12th graders who have earned three (3) or more credits in any CTE program in any combination during their years of high school. Currently enrolled CTE courses count toward credits earned.

CTE Concentrators must have the *'CTE Concentrator'* box checked and an *'Area of Concentration'* entered into the AIM/Infinite Campus data system. If the student has a child or shares the parenting of a child, the *'Single Parent'* box should also be marked.

High schools who receive funding from the Carl D. Perkins federal grant program must complete this CTE Spring Data Collection.

Instructions for completing the CTE Spring Data Collection can be found on the AIM webpage located at this link: http://opi.mt.gov/Reports&Data/AIM entitled Spring CTE Collection.

Questions regarding this data collection should be directed to the AIM Helpdesk at 877.424.6681 or send an email to opiaimhelp@mt.gov.

Questions regarding CTE programs and/or the Carl D. Perkins federal grant program should be directed to Diana Fiedler at dfiedler@mt.gov or 406.444.9019.

EverFi - Critical Skills Curriculum Available at No Cost to Schools

You may have heard of EverFi and their financial literacy platform being used throughout the state. EverFi also has a number of STEM, Civic Engagement, Digital Literacy, Career Success, and Health/Wellness courses also available at no cost to schools.

Through unique private-public partnerships, EverFi brings critical skills curriculum to schools at *no cost.* This online platform is easy to implement, engaging for students, and EverFi has a staff member based in Helena dedicated to supporting Montana schools.

To see the various courses, visit info.everfi.com/K12LearningPlatform.html. You may also contact Mick Karls, of EverFi, at mick@everfi.com or 406.204.1148.

Do you have students interested in a $500 scholarship? Enter the Montana Bankers Association Blog Contest at http://info.everfi.com/MontanaBlogContest.html.

2015 Computer Science Teachers Association Annual Conference Registration Now Open
The Computer Science Teachers Association will be holding the 2015 CSTA Annual Conference July 12-14 in Grapevine, Texas.

The CSTA Annual Conference provides professional development opportunities for K–12 computer science and information technology teachers who need practical, relevant information to help them prepare their students for the future.

Use the following links for additional information and details.

--Registration: www.softconf.com/f/csta2015/

--Conference Schedule: csta.acm.org/ProfessionalDevelopment/sub/CSTA15/2015_Agenda_DRAFTv5.pdf

--Concurrent Session Descriptions:
csta.acm.org/ProfessionalDevelopment/sub/CSTA15/CSTA2015Sessions.pdf

--Three-Hour Workshop Descriptions:
csta.acm.org/ProfessionalDevelopment/sub/CSTA15/CSTA2015Workshops.pdf

--Conference Lodging: csta.acm.org/ProfessionalDevelopment/sub/CSTA15/Housing.html

Online registration opened February 16 and closes June 26.

Conference registration (which includes an afternoon community session on Sunday, July 12, Monday night's event (TBD), and all general and plenary sessions on Tuesday, July 14) is $100 if you register by April 15.

From April 16-June 26 the price is $150 and after that the price goes up to $225.

Workshops are a separate price, and this year we have expanded our offering to include some on Sunday, as well as Monday. The price for workshops is $100 for the first one, and then $50 for each additional workshop (maximum number of three).

*Please note that CSTA does not cover the cost of registration, travel or accommodations for speakers or attendees.

Please email any questions to t.nash@csta-hq.org.

CTE Student Participation Reports—Now Collected from TEAMS

The 2014-2015 Career and Technical Education (CTE) Student Participation Report information used for CTE program approval and CTE State funding allocations will be extracted from the TEAMS *(Terms of Employment, Accreditation, and Master Schedule)* information already submitted and on file at the OPI. This change means that CTE teachers and/or other district personnel will NOT be submitting participation report information via an online link as they have in the past. Good news!

Because the CTE tab in the TEAMS data system had not been activated prior to the November deadline, **a few items on the new CTE tab will require each districts' attention now**. The CTE tab has just been made available and is ready for input from high school districts.

The items needed are: CTE programs offered, CTE teachers with an extended contract, and identifying the number of males enrolled in each CTE course (only enrollment totals were reported). Next fall, all CTE information will be added at the same time as the rest of the TEAMS fall data input.

To add the additional CTE information into TEAMS, a password is required to log in. Authorized Representatives (AR's) will either ask those personnel in their district who already have access to TEAMS to add the additional CTE information, or they will assign someone new to add it. For any new TEAMS users, AR's must submit a signed *TEAMS Security Form* to the OPI requesting School Level access for those new TEAMS users.

Once access is granted, follow the instructions found at http://www.opi.mt.gov/pdf/SchoolStaffing/15CTE_Help_Guide.pdf to find and fill out the CTE screen in TEAMS. The link to the TEAMS login is shown below and also posted on the OPI website under the *'Reports & Data'* tab on the *'School Staffing Project/TEAMS'* page, as a purple button labeled, 'TEAMS Login'.

TEAMS LINK: https://apps3.opi.mt.gov/SSO/Login?Login.aspx

The CTE information collected in TEAMS is used for Carl Perkins accountability reporting and factors that determine the State CTE (State VoEd) allocations. Therefore, it is imperative that the information submitted is complete and accurate. Any high school district planning to apply for Carl Perkins and/or State CTE (State VoEd) funding for next year (2015-2016) should submit the additional data in TEAMS for all current CTE programs at their high school.

Technical TEAMS questions should be directed to Danielle Murphy, TEAMS Project Manager, by phone at 406.444.1625 or send her an email at dmurphy@mt.gov.

Questions regarding the Perkins Federal Grant Program data requirements or CTE-related questions should be directed to Diana Fiedler, Perkins Accountability Specialist, by phone at 406.444.9019 or send her an email at dfiedler@mt.gov.

20th Annual Montana Economics Challenge Registration Due Next Week, March 13

The Helena Branch of the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis is now accepting registrations for the 20th Annual Montana Economics Challenge. This year's Montana Economics Challenge will take place March 30, 2015, in Helena.

The Federal Reserve Bank invites Montana high school teachers who incorporate economic learning in their classrooms to assemble teams of students to compete in a challenging array of tests covering economic concepts, issues and reasoning.

The purpose of the Economics Challenge is to increase students' exposure to and interest in economics in an entertaining atmosphere. The Economics Challenge began in 1988 as a product of the Minnesota Council on Economic Education. The Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis became involved in 1992 when it sponsored a playoff round for the winning schools from the state's various regional centers for economic education. The Helena Branch, along with the MCEE, participated for the first time in 1996 when it held the first Economics Challenge in Montana.

Teams are comprised of three or four students who compete individually and as a team. Essentially, each participant takes a 15-question, multiple-choice test in each of the following three areas: Microeconomics, Macroeconomics and International Trade and Economics. To determine team scores, the top three individuals' scores in each category are combined. The top two teams after the first three rounds will compete against each other in a buzzer round on general economics and current events to determine the final winner. Awards for top scores are given to individuals and to teams. Please keep in mind that each school may have more than one team and that it is not necessary for a school to offer a general economics class to compete in the Challenge.

The Federal Reserve Bank will cover costs associated with the Montana Challenge, including refreshments, breakfast, a luncheon, awards, and test facilitation. The Montana Bankers Association will cover lodging expenses on Sunday, March 29 for teams who wish to travel to Helena the day before the Challenge and the Montana Council on Economic Education (www.econedmontana.org/) will cover costs for a substitute teacher on March 30. Winners of the state competition will go on to compete in the National Semifinals which will be proctored exams taken at the state champions' schools on April 14. The National Economics Challenge Finals will be held in New York City, May 16-18.

Registrations are due by March 13, 2015 and the registration form can be downloaded at https://app.box.com/s/lzkgexap6snbwjh16878y49sjfs1aawt. Registrations can be submitted by one of the following methods:

1) Email completed forms to: Helena.MTChallenge@mpls.frb.org (you may reply to this email)
2) Fax completed forms to 612-629-4233
3) Mail completed forms to
   Federal Reserve Bank
   Attn: Rhonda Krieger
   100 Neill Avenue
   Helena, MT 59601

You are welcome to bring more than one team. Teams may consist of 3 or 4 students each. Please fill out one registration form for each team. Space is limited, so register early!

For more information, a brochure detailing the Montana Economics Challenge can be downloaded at https://app.box.com/s/rv4bjeqoexib1vzy4otyixr4an5bllmv. If you have questions, please contact Rhonda Krieger at 406.447.3864 or 1.800.823.4233, ext. 73864.

Reminder to All High School Districts with Remaining Perkins Funds

The CTE Division of the OPI is providing this friendly reminder to all high school districts with an outstanding 2014-2015 Perkins allocation to please obligate your remaining funds before the end of the current school year.

If you have questions regarding your Perkins balance or any submitted cash requests, please contact Leisa Blanton, Perkins Accountant, at 406-444-4403 or email her at lblanton@mt.gov.

If you have questions about obligating your Perkins funds, please contact either Brad King or Renee Harris.

Brad King—phone: 406.444.4451; email: bking2@mt.gov
Renee Harris—phone: 406.994.6986; email: rharris3@mt.gov

Looking for Ideas & Resources to Teach Coding? Stop Scratching Your Head & Try This for Free

Coding is another term for software programming. One option to get students interested in and starting to code is by using Scratch.

Scratch is a software tool that helps students learn software programming. It was designed for students who have never coded before. Scratch is free and open source software, developed by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and can be used online or downloaded for free at scratch.mit.edu/.

With Scratch, you and your students can program your own interactive stories, games, and animations — and share creations with others in the online community.

Scratch helps young people learn to think creatively, reason systematically, and work collaboratively — essential skills for life in the 21st century.

To get students learning and working with Scratch, below are some websites introducing Scratch as well as warm-up exercise and video tutorials for creating a Frogger game using Scratch.

--How to Use Scratch: http://www.witty.ca/scratch-2---how-to.html

--Scratch Warm-Up Exercises: http://www.witty.ca/scratch-2---introduction.html

--Using Scratch to Create a Frogger Game: http://www.witty.ca/scratch-2---frogger-p1.html

Today is the Last Day to Qualify for Bank On It Amazon Gift Card

Start Here, Go Places. ® recently celebrated the one-year anniversary of Bank On It®, and wanted to thank you for helping make it a success!

Start Here, Go Places. ® strives to ensure the game is a valuable resource you continue to use, and your students continue to enjoy. Feedback from teachers like you will help make that happen! In fact, they consider your

feedback so valuable that they would like to send you a virtual high five and a **$10 Amazon gift card** to thank you for your time!

Start Here, Go Places. ® knows you're busy, which is why they've made the feedback survey super short and mostly multiple choice. The more honest you are, the more ammo they will have to make Bank On It a more engaging resource for you and your students.

Today, March 4, is the last day to access the survey here.

Proposed "Programming for Teachers" Course at UofM Next Fall
The University of Montana in Missoula is proposing a course for fall 2015 titled "Programming for Teachers."

The instructor for the course will be Michael Cassens with instruction being held online with web-based face-to-face times to be determined.

The course will be offered for three (3) credits through Continuing Education. The total cost for the credits has yet to be determined.

The course will focus on either Python or Java; whichever is the consensus. The goal of the course is to teach the language and pedagogy for teaching programming. Programming education in Montana is expanding. The number of students requesting a programming course or considering a computer science direction at the university level is increasing. At the moment there is no course in Montana to teach teachers programming and this course is an attempt to fill that need.

"Programming for Teachers" is intended for anyone interested in teaching programming. Prior knowledge of some programming language would be useful but considering the lack of experience in the state beginners can be accommodated. There should be more than enough experienced programming teachers enrolled to help those totally new to the subject.

Since this is a first-time offering the first-time takers will be involved in writing the course. If you have particular things you would like to see in the course be sure to suggest them to either Garth Flint (gflint@mcsmt.org) or Michael Cassesn (michael.cassens@mso.umt.edu). They have a concept of what they want in the course, a "Java for Teachers", but the course direction is open for discussion.

If you are interested in the course, have suggestions for course content, please contact Garth Flint, Technology Coordinator for Missoula Catholic Schools, at gflint@mcsmt.rog by April 1.

Early-Bird Registration for 2015 NBEA Convention Closes Next Week, March 11
The 2015 National Business Education Association Convention will take place March 31-April 4 in Chicago.

The 2015 NBEA Convention offers exciting, innovative, and progressive educational sessions that will enhance and refresh you as a business educator. Don't miss this wonderful opportunity for professional growth.

Make the decision today to join us in Chicago. Below are the links for convention registration and hotel reservations at the Chicago Marriott Downtown Magnificent Mile.

2015 Convention Registration: http://www.nbea.org/newsite/conferences/convention/registration.html

2015 Convention Hotel Reservations: https://aws.passkey.com/event/12124981/owner/1361/home

The Early-Bird registration deadline is Wednesday, March 11.

If you have already registered for the 2015 NBEA Convention, we thank you and look forward to seeing you in Chicago.

Register Today for the ACTE Region V Leadership Conference
The Western region of the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE) will be holding its 2015 Leadership Conference in Overland Park, Kansas, April 15-18.

Hosted by the Kansas Association for Career and Technical Education, registration for 2015 ACTE Region V Leadership Conference is now open. Links to all the information regarding the 2015 ACTE Region V Leadership Conference, including lodging and registration details, can be found at http://www.k-acte.org/Region-V-2015.

The early-bird registration deadline is March 15 with hotel reservations at the Overland Park Marriott needing to be finalized by March 25.

Introduce Your Students to Coding and Earn $1000 or More for Your Classroom
All the technology you and your students love and use—mobile games, medical devices, YouTube videos -- are all made with code. Imagine what your students could invent!

From Khan Academy and thanks to a partnership with DonorsChoose.org and Google, you can **earn $1,000 or more for your classroom** by helping your students complete an online, self-guided, introductory coding course.

Any public high school teacher can participate! Whether you're teaching English, math, or art history -- if your students can type, they can get started with this tutorial. You can offer extra credit, start an after-school coding club, or spend a week on programming in your classroom. Your students can discover the magic of coding in a 12-hour course at their own pace.

Here's how it works:

Step 1: Register your class at https://www.khanacademy.org/donors-choose and invite your students to join it. Help them complete the Intro to JS course by **March 17, 2015.**

Step 2: In April, you'll receive a DonorsChoose.org gift code equal to $100 per student (e.g. if you help 15 students, you'll receive a $1,500 gift code).

Step 3: You'll receive a wrap-up survey for your students. If 10 or more of you students self-identify as part of groups traditionally under-represented in computer science, we'll send you an additional **$1,000 gift code** as a thank you.

Questions? See the full details, which also explain how to get help if any coding questions come up. Together we can help more students learn to code and bring more funding into the classroom.
Let's do it!

$tudents Can Blog & Win $ome $$$$ in the Montana Bankers Financial Scholars Blog Contest
The Montana Bankers Association and their member banks are encouraging students across Montana to speak up and share their stories about how financial education has and will impact their lives by launching the Montana Bankers Financial Scholars Student Blog Contest.

Students are encouraged to tap into their creativity and get involved for a chance to win one of three **$500 prizes** to be used toward their education.

Visit the blog contest guidelines to learn more about the contest and promote it to your students.

Montana Bankers Financial Scholars Student Blog Contest entries are a great opportunity for extra credit, for generating ideas for a class or group project, or can even be a homework assignment.

The deadline for submissions is 11:59 p.m. on May 11, 2015.

For further information about EverFi and the critical skills courses offered to schools at no cost or the blog contest, contact Mick Karls at mick@everfi.com or 406.204.1148.

Fun Facts and Trivia
In Florida, it is against the law to put livestock on a school bus

In New Jersey, cabbage can't be sold on Sunday

In Galveston, Texas, it is illegal to have a camel run loose in the street

In North Carolina, it is against the law for dogs and cats to fight.

In Singapore, it is illegal to chew gum

In Cleveland, Ohio, it is unlawful to leave chewing gum in public places

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.

Eric Swenson
Business Education Specialist
Montana Office of Public Instruction
PO Box 202501
Helena, MT 59620-2501
406.444.7991

406.444.1373 (Fax)
eswenson@mt.gov

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"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