

The Wednesday Reader **December 16, 2020**

Please note: This will be the last Wednesday Reader for 2020 as I will be on vacation December 21-January 2. Have a Merry Christmas, a Happy New Year, and an enjoyable holiday break.

Changes Coming to the Wednesday Reader in the New Year

In January, the *Wednesday Reader* will start being sent out via the OPI's govDelivery system. This is the same system used for the monthly CTAE Newsletter and updates/announcements you may already be receiving regarding Perkins, State CTE Funding, and other OPI news and announcements.

The *Wednesday Reader* will be coming from a generic OPI email address, mtopi@announcements.mt.gov. Please be sure to add this email to your address book and/or safe lists to ensure continued delivery of the *Wednesday Reader* each week.

Governor Bullock Announces Montana's Participation in CyberStart America

Governor Steve Bullock has announced that Montana will again partner with the SANS Institute to provide high school students with a free and fun opportunity to learn cybersecurity skills and qualify for the Cyber Scholarship Competition.

"[CyberStart America \(cyberstartamerica.org\)](https://www.cyberstartamerica.org) gives high school students across Montana an engaging opportunity to unlock their cybersecurity skills," Governor Bullock said. "Cybersecurity is a rapidly growing field, and this competition is a great way for students who are looking towards their next steps to start exploring a rewarding career in cybersecurity."

Montana participated in Girls Go CyberStart the previous two years. That initiative focused on girls and continues as a girls-only community within this year's expanded competition called CyberStart America which is open to high school boys and girls.

Girls Go CyberStart is featured as an exclusive community within CyberStart America and can be selected on the registration page. The Girls Scouts of Montana & Wyoming have created an innovative companion program called GirlSCOUTS Go CyberStart which provides Girls Scouts registered for the Girls Go CyberStart competition with additional opportunities for collaboration and supplemental activities to aid Girl Scouts in completing the requirements for their Cybersecurity badges. More information about GirlSCOUTS Go CyberStart will be on the Girl Scouts of Montana & Wyoming website.

"Innovative programs like CyberStart America and GirlSCOUTS Go CyberStart are essential to introducing cybersecurity to the next generation that will protect our data," said Andy Hanks, Montana's Chief Information Security Officer. "I am glad that we have partners like SANS and the Girl Scouts of Montana & Wyoming to inspire interests in cybersecurity."

Registration for CyberStart America is open now at www.cyberstartamerica.org, students must reach the qualifying level in the CyberStart Game by March 8, 2021 to be invited to the [National Scholarship Competition](#).

CyberStart America is a free national program for high school students, aiming to uncover hidden cyber talents, promote cyber safety, and to identify and develop the next generation of cyber superstars.

Building on the success of previous CyberStart programs like [Girls Go CyberStart](#), high school students of any gender can now get access to our fun, free online learning games through [CyberStart America](#).

The program gives students free access to CyberStart Game until April 2021, through which they can progress at their own pace; solving puzzles, completing challenges, and gaining skills in cybersecurity. Students can play just for fun, to improve problem-solving and digital skills, or can use the CyberStart America program to qualify and train for the [National Cyber Scholarship Competition](#). Teachers can leave their students to have fun learning Game independently; or, can incorporate the free educational game into lesson plans, or set it as online homework.

Reach Higher Montana Launches Annual Scholarship—Students can Earn \$1,000 Scholarship

Do you know a student who could use \$1,000 to help pay for their education? The Reach Higher Montana Scholarship program opens on December 1, 2020, at www.ReachHigherMontana.org.

This year, the Montana-based nonprofit organization will award 81 scholarships—30 awards for Class of 2021 graduating high school seniors, and 50 awards for students currently attending a Montana college or university for use in the 2021-2022 academic year.

In addition, one \$1,000 scholarship is earmarked for a current college student who has, or is currently, serving in the military. “The Carl Valvoda Military Scholarship is awarded in memory of Carl Valvoda, the son and husband of two former co-workers, who passed away due to a brain tumor,” said Rhonda Safford, Reach Higher Montana Programs Manager.

The deadline to apply is January 15, 2021.

To be eligible for the scholarship, all applicants must have at least a 2.5 cumulative GPA, be attending or have graduated from a Montana high school, and complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) for 2021-2022. Scholarships may only be used at Montana postsecondary education institutions, including private and tribal colleges, and two-year, four-year, and university campuses. Scholarship funds are awarded directly to the colleges and can be applied towards any elements of the recipient’s cost of attendance as calculated by the financial aid office.

Students interested in applying for the Reach Higher Montana scholarships are cautioned to watch carefully which application they are completing—high school students need to complete the high school application; current college students need to complete the current college student application.

The [Reach Higher Montana website](#) provides access to hundreds of scholarships, and the organization posts new scholarship opportunities on its Facebook and Instagram pages every Thursday.

For more information, please visit Reach Higher Montana’s website, www.ReachHigherMontana.org.

Friday, December 18, is Deadline for WBEA Awards Program Nominations

Now is the time to nominate and recognize a colleague through the [Western Business Education Association](#) (WBEA) [awards](#) program.

Nominations can be submitted for

- Outstanding Educator at the Middle School, High School, Post-secondary, or University level
- Outstanding Career & Technical Student Organization Advisor
- Distinguished Service
- Distinguished Service Award for a Company, or a Representative of a Company, or Legislator
- Communication Recognition
- Western Business Education Association Recognition Certificate

All details and application materials can be found on the WBEA website at wbea.info/awards.

For questions regarding the WBEA awards program, please contact WBEA Awards & Scholarship Director Joshua Fisher at jfisher@astoria.k12.or.us.

Deadline to Apply for WBEA Educational Opportunity Scholarship is Friday, December 18

The Western Business Education Association encourages Business Educators working on an advanced degree to apply for the [WBEA Educational Opportunity Scholarship](#).

The [WBEA Educational Opportunity Scholarship](#) is provided to help offset tuition costs for educators who are pursuing an advanced degree to support teaching in the area of Business Education. The amount of the yearly scholarship is determined each year according to availability of funds.

Eligible candidates must meet the following criteria:

- be a current member of an S/T/P and a member of WBEA/NBEA
- be currently engaged in the business/computer education profession in the Western Region
- register for and pass a credit class with a "C" grade or better
- provide proof of payment and a grade sheet or unofficial transcript upon completion of the class to the Professional Development Director

Complete scholarship details can be found on the WEBE website at wbea.info/professional-development.

The deadline to apply for the [WBEA Educational Opportunity Scholarship](#) is December 18.

For questions, please contact Joshua Fisher, WBEA Awards & Scholarship Director, at jfisher@astoria.k12.or.us.

Resources & Events for Now and into the New Year from EVERFI

[Sustainability Foundations](#) and [Plants, Animals, and Our World](#) (grades 5-8) introduces students to the basics of sustainability (human health, global resource constraints, animal welfare), focusing on the choices learners can make every day. All courses that are part of the sustainability curriculum will introduce learners to concepts that relate to environmental, material, and life sciences.

[Vaping: Know the truth](#) (grades 8-12) With one-third of high school students vaping, educating our youth about the dangers and harms is critical. Vaping: Know the truth is a prevention-forward digital learning experience that gives today's students core knowledge around the dangers associated with e-cigarettes. In this course, students will learn how the marketing of e-cigarettes targets young consumers, as well as how use of the products can impact their health. Students will learn refusal skills as well as ways to seek out and utilize support services that are available for those young people who already vape and are looking to quit.

[Virtual Science Fair](#): From now until January 15, 2021, the NHL & NHLPA are launching the Future Goals™ Virtual Science Fair to provide an opportunity for students to creatively apply their learned knowledge from the Future Goals - Hockey Scholar program. Students will have the chance to showcase their STEM skills to take home an NHL® STEM-At-Home Prize Pack and impact the future of hockey.

[EVERFI's new LearnOn Channel](#): The education space is evolving, and teachers around the world are making magical moments in response. If you are energized by celebrating lifelong learning through

shared wins, professional development and educational technology, EVERFI hopes you check out the community #LearnOn. Tune in each Friday as educators and experts #LearnOn together.

Montana Financial Education Coalition Launches Meme Contest

The [Montana Financial Education Coalition](#) (MFEC) is launching a financial education-themed meme contest that is open to middle school and high school students across Montana.

Students should create an image meme about financial education. Suggested topics include spending and saving, budgeting, building credit, credit-debt cycle traps, credit scores/reports, investing, buying goods and services, earning income, identity theft, or insurance.

All entries must be submitted through the online [meme submission form](#). Students must review the [Meme Contest Rules and Instructions](#) prior to making any submissions. Entries will be judged on originality, importance, and wit/humor.

The submission deadline is 5 p.m. Mountain Standard Time, December 18, 2020. Finalists will be posted to an album on the MFEC Facebook page.

Voting will kick off on January 6, 2021. The top six memes garnering the most “likes” on Facebook will be eligible for a cash award.

Join MCEE’s Teacher Talk on January 13

As promised when the [Montana Council on Economic Education](#) (MCEE) convened their first group of teachers for our online professional development this summer, they wanted to adapt and offer programming that added value and evolved based on feedback.

MCEE has received encouragement to continue the monthly check-in opportunities, but to focus on different topics that could be more relevant to different classroom experiences.

In January, MCEE will bring the focus to teachers working in Economics and the best tools/methods in delivering economic fundamentals either in person or remotely in today's C19 environment and the uncertainties of attendance.

[Economics - Wednesday, January 13 from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m.](#)

Click the link above to register.

If you have topics you want highlighted for February, March or April, please email Dax Schieffer at mcee@montana.edu.

Jump\$tart Announces Free Online Professional Development via J\$FFE Online

The [Jump\\$tart Coalition for Personal Financial Literacy](#) is excited to announce a new professional development opportunity—Jump\$tart Financial Foundations for Educators Online, or [J\\$FFE Online](#).

J\$FFE is a comprehensive, content-based professional development program for teachers, designed to improve their own financial knowledge and confidence – and help them make smart consumer decisions of their own – before taking that knowledge into classrooms at all grade levels.

The first module of J\$FFE Online– [Spending and Saving](#) – is available now.

[Registration](#) is required, but this distance learning program is absolutely free.

Computer Science PD Workshops Offered by AVID in Partnership with CODE.org

Are you looking to grow your computer science teaching skills? Join the Montana-based workshops with other educators from your region. 98% of teachers recommend our engaging professional learning programs to teach computer science. Spaces are limited, so apply today,

K–5 Educators: Computer Science Fundamentals

Designed to be fun and engaging, Code.org’s progression of Computer Science Fundamentals courses blend online and “unplugged” non-computer activities to teach students computational thinking, problem solving, programming concepts and digital citizenship.

--Dates: February 9 & 16, 2021

--Time: 4:00-7:00 p.m.

--Location: Virtual/Online

Learn More at [Code.org](#).

6–10 Grade Educators: Computer Science Discoveries

Mapped to CSTA K-12 Computer Science Standards, the course takes a wide lens on computer science by covering topics such as problem solving, programming, physical computing, user-centered design, and data, while inspiring students as they build their own websites, apps, animations, games, and physical computing systems.

--Dates: June 21-25, 2021

--Time: 9 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

--Location: Helena, MT (location TBD)

--Dates: August 9-13, 2021

--Time: 9 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

--Location: Virtual/Online

Learn More at [Code.org](#).

9–12 Grade Educators: Computer Science Principles

This course introduces educators to the foundational concepts of computer science and challenges them to explore how computing and technology can impact the world. It is rigorous, engaging, and approachable, all while exploring many of the foundational ideas of computing to explain how these concepts are transforming the world in which we live.

--Dates: June 21-25, 2021

--Time: 9 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

--Location: Helena, MT (location TBD)

--Dates: August 9-13, 2021

--Time: 9 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

--Location: Virtual/Online

Learn More at [Code.org](#).

Renewal units will be offered. For questions, please contact Ty Stevenson, AVID/Code.org Product Manager, at tstevenson@avid.org or 206.390.2829.

Amazon Future Engineer Scholarship Awards Now Open

The [Amazon Future Engineer Scholarship](#) awards 100 high school seniors with a \$40,000 scholarship for college, plus a guaranteed paid internship programming at Amazon. For high school seniors seeking to continue their computer science education at a four-year college, the program can make all the difference for a bright and developing future.

Encourage your students to [apply](#). The deadline for applications is February 18, 2021. For complete details, please visit amazonfutureengineer.com/scholarship.

Every year students share it was the encouraging and persistent nudge of a teacher that ultimately convinced them to apply. Your encouragement could change a student's life.

Federal Register Notice Inviting Applications: 2021 Native American Career & Technical Education Program (NACTEP) Competition

The U. S. Department of Education's Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) is pleased to announce the posting in the November 30, 2020, Federal Register of a notice inviting applications for new awards for fiscal year (FY) 2021 for the [Native American Career and Technical Education Program](#) (NACTEP).

NACTEP provides grants to improve career and technical education (CTE) programs that are consistent with the purposes of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, as amended by the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (the Act or Perkins V) and that benefit Native Americans and Alaska Natives.

The link to the Federal Register Notice is available at:

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/11/30/2020-26112/applications-for-new-awards-native-american-career-and-technical-education-program-nactep>.

The deadline for the transmittal of applications is January 29, 2021.

Please direct any inquiries regarding the 2021 NACTEP grant opportunity to nactep@ed.gov.

The Prospects: 2021 High School Business Plan & Pitch Competition Now Open

Administered by the Montana Chamber Foundation, [THE PROSPECTS](#) is a virtual statewide entrepreneurship competition with scholarships, cash, and technology prizes for high school students with new ideas and existing small businesses. All entrants will have opportunities for mentoring and internships, apprenticeships, and work-based learning.

[The Prospects](#) is a collaborative initiative and platform for investing in our students by connecting them with business and community leaders. Students are encouraged to display their entrepreneurial spirit with products and services, innovative problem solving, and community or social improvements for Montana (and beyond!). Statewide leaders will act as third-party judges, providing scores and choosing winners, as well as their recommendations, feedback, and potentially employment opportunities.

The submission portal opened on Monday, November 16, 2020, and will close at midnight (MST) on Friday, February 12, 2021.

For complete details about [The Prospects](#) competition, please visit montanachamber.com/prospects.

[The Prospects](#) competition is offered through partnerships between the [Montana Chamber Foundation](#) and [Youth Entrepreneurs](#) and sponsors First Interstate Bank, Montana State Fund, and Northwestern Energy.

\$10,000 Scholarship Opportunity for Your Students from CSTA

The Computer Science Teachers Association & the Association for Computing Machinery are pleased to announce the application period is now open for the CSTA/ACM Cutler-Bell Prize in High School Computing.

If you are a 9–12 computer science educator who is working with high school seniors looking to continue their studies in computer science or technology, tell them to apply for the [\\$10,000 CSTA/ACM Cutler-Bell Prize](#).

These funds will be provided to the university of their choice and they will be honored at CSTA's 2021 Virtual Conference. Up to four (4) scholarships will be awarded. The application period closes on January 12, 2021.

For complete scholarship details, please visit csteachers.org/page/csta-acm-cutler-bell-prize.

Perkins 2020 Secondary Rural Reserve Grant RFP

The Career & Technical Education unit of the Office of Public Instruction has been awarded some additional funds to help support Montana's smaller schools with additional Perkins dollars.

Purpose: To create career awareness, recruit, and retain students within a CTE Secondary Program of Study that leads to a high skill, high wage, or in-demand occupations.

Awards: Grants of up to \$2,000 each will be available to Secondary Perkins eligible school districts who receive less than \$5,000 in Perkins funding and are considered remote rural schools as defined by NCES.

Schools will have had to complete the Perkins Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA) and Perkins E-Grant application as well.

More details are provided in the [Perkins Secondary Rural Reserve Grant application](#).

For more information please email Shannon.boswell@mt.gov.

Fun Facts and Trivia

Needlefish derives its name from the elongated jaw and its slender body. It is mostly found in the temperate and tropical waters.

They stay at the surface of the water and artificial light at night excites them.

Needlefish leap out of the water when they are threatened or if they see bright light at night.

Their slender body has silver sides with a greenish back.

They are generally blue, green with silvery bellies.

The jaw of the needlefish has several sharp teeth with the upper jaw being slightly shorter than the lower one.

Needlefish belongs to the Beloniformes family which has 34 species categorized into 10 genera; in Greek, 'Belone' means 'needle'.

Needlefish are related to Flying Fish.

Their population exists in India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Vietnam, and Malaysia.

A part of their population has also been introduced in Hawaii.

These predatory fish are shallow water fishes and school at the surface of the water.

Needlefish usually show enthusiasm for live food and like any other predatory fishes, they gorge one day and hardly eat anything the other day.

Needlefish feed on small fishes, stalking their prey and catching them with a sideway sweep with their scissor-like jaws.

They mostly feed on shrimps, killifishes, crustaceans, cephalopods, silversides and planktons.

Freshwater needlefishes also prey on tadpoles, frogs, and insects.

The eggs of the needlefish are attached by a sticky thread which gets entangled in the floating debris or seaweeds.

The larvae are capable of feeding as soon as they hatch.

Needlefishes fall prey to bigger fishes like Tuna.

Some needlefishes reach a length of six feet.

The Atlantic needlefish, found in Atlantic coastal waters and estuaries from Maine to Brazil, is usually smaller, about three-and-a-half feet long.

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



"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