Important Notice from OPI'S Licensure Office

Attention to all Montana Educators: The Montana State Educator Information System (MSEIS) will be shutting down to the public on December 31, 2021. The Office of Public Instruction (OPI) will not be accepting any new applications via that system after that date.

If you have an open application or need to renew in 2022, you will have the option of submitting any necessary documentation by paper through February 1, 2022. For licenses expiring on June 30, 2022, renewals can submitted beginning January 1, 2022.

Information on this process and answers to other questions you may have will be added to the Educator Licensure page in the next month.

The new licensure system is projected be deployed and opened for use on June 1, 2022.

MCIS Training Opportunity Today

The Montana Career Lab will be hosting webinars in December on how to use the Montana Career Information System (MCIS).

Today, Wednesday, December 8, the topic will be MCIS Education and Training. This will be an introduction and overview of the education and training research and planning features of the MCIS. Topics covered will include: determining how to match colleges, courses, degrees, and occupations; comparing college costs, offerings, and data; researching and applying for financial aid; using the College Course Planner; and overview of Montana apprenticeships.

Session 1 will be 10-11 am (MST). Click here to register. Session 2 will be 3:30-4:30 pm (MST). Click here to register for session 2.

Whether you new to MCIS or a seasoned user, visit the Montana Career Lab website for resources to use with MCIS and to enhance your career development teaching toolkit.

Lessons to Keep Students Engaged in Weeks Before Winter Break from EVERFI

This time of year can be especially challenging to keep students engaged, motivated, and learning. Try leveraging one of the hundreds of free and fully student directed lessons from EVERFI. Their resource library contains a wide variety of critical K-12 lessons on financial literacy, career exploration, SEL, and more.

Getting started takes only minutes, and these lessons are great tools for pre-break learning (or even activities to build skills at home). Contact your local EVERFI support leader Sean (sthomas@everfi.com) and he can show you how to access the lesson over email, in a 15-minute call, or by leading your class through their first virtual lesson.

Friday, December 10, is Deadline for Fall Edition of The Prospects 2022 Business Competition

The Montana Chamber Foundation is excited to be hosting this competition again and cannot wait to see what ideas are submitted. There are thousands of dollars in cash, scholarships, and experiences available. Last year there were 93 submissions and a $53,000 prize purse. This is a great opportunity to get your students ideas exposed to business leaders in Montana. There are 100 judges lined up for this year and the goal is for 200 student submissions with a $100,000 prize purse.

Last year, Matt Olson was your main contact; Matt is still around, but Tiana Yates (tiana@montanachamber.com), the Montana Chamber Youth Entrepreneurs Coordinator, will be your main contact for this year's competition. You do not have to be teaching Youth Entrepreneurs (YE) to participate in the contest, but it was observed last year, it was helpful.

The Prospects will be split into two rounds this year; Fall and Spring. The Fall competition is open October 1-December 10 for submissions and Spring competition will run January 17-March 18. The Awards Show will be held virtually, April 22 at 12 pm (MDT).

Eligibility: Any of Montana's 40,000+ high school aged students (grades 9-12) 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.

The following is the video of the Rapelje team that won last year for their drone submission and received this awesome experience for their school: Workforce Readiness. Where Innovation Meets Opportunity. Rapelje, Montana - YouTube.

Applications are Now Open in Montana for the Code.org Professional Learning Program

Applications are now open for Code.org's Professional Learning Program for middle and high school educators. If you are interested in teaching computer science for the 2022-2023 academic year, this is your time to explore computer science (CS) curriculum and collaborate with educators of all experience levels to develop lesson plans and teaching strategies.

What is the Professional Learning Program? Hosted by highly trained facilitators, the professional development workshops will prepare you to confidently bring CS to your students as well as connect with an online and in-person community of peers. Most workshops have scholarship funding available.

New this year, Computer Science A (CSA) professional learning has arrived. For teachers looking for support in teaching CSA in the 2022-23 school year, find a professional learning program near you.

Elementary teachers can sign-up for a one-day workshop near you! Applications are not required for Computer Science Fundamentals workshops and take place throughout the country, year-round.

Middle and high school teachers will begin with a five-day workshop on Computer Science Discoveries, Computer Science Principles and Computer Science A in the summer, with academic year workshops thereafter.

Workshops for Montana teachers include—

CS Discoveries:
--June 27-July 1, 2022; Seattle
--August 1-5, 2022; Virtual

CS Principles:
--June 27-July 1, 2022; Seattle
--August 1-5, 2022; Virtual

Computer Science A:
--June 27-July 1, 2022; Seattle

Avid, Montana's regional Code.org partner, has scholarships available for teachers in Montana. That means you can apply to possibly attend this professional learning program at reduced or no cost to you/your school. AVID is planning on offering both virtual and in-person/hybrid summer workshops during the summer of 2022, and will switch to all-virtual if needed.

If you have any questions, please use this form to contact your regional partner.

PBS Media Literacy Micro-Credential and Professional Development
Demonstrate your expertise in teaching PreK-12 students to think critically about their roles as media consumers and creators—or in training teachers to do so.

To promote competency-based validation of media literacy skills for educators of all kinds, PBS and KQED offer media literacy micro-credentials that are available for free via the Digital Promise platform. Teachers, ToSAs, coaches, and librarians are all encouraged to apply. Choose a micro-credential from the list below and log in to the Digital Promise platform. Earn eight micro-credentials and automatically become a PBS Certified Media Literacy Educator.

These free, instructor-led courses on KQED Teach include:

--Assessing Student Media
--Creating a Code of Conduct
--Critically Analyzing Media
--Evaluating Online Information
--Evaluating Online Tools for Classroom Use
--Implementing Media Projects: in Early Childhood or in Upper Grades
--Making Media for Classroom Use: Audio & Video
--Making Media for Classroom Use: Images, Graphics & Interactives

PBS Media Literacy Educator Certification by KQED was a 2020 EdTech Awards finalist in the Badging & Credentialing category and KQED Media Literacy Educator micro-credentials received the 2019 Award of Excellence from Tech & Learning magazine.

Learn more about the PBS Media Literacy Micro-Credential.

APBP Advanced Accounting Curriculum Summer Training Schedule
The Association of International Certified Professional Accountants (AICPA) is very excited to announce that Accounting Project to Bridge the Profession (APBP) trainings are back.

The AICPA offers training for high school teachers on an advanced accounting curriculum. This college-level course provides students with a real-world view of the accounting profession while focusing on the development of critical thinking skills. If you are an accounting, finance, or business educator and would like to receive *FREE* training, please join the AICPA this summer. To learn more about APBP, click here.

There will be holding four summer training sessions across the country in 2022. Thank you to everyone who participated in the APBP training survey which helped us pick the following locations:

--Las Vegas, Nevada at AICPA's ENGAGE Conference: June 7-9, 2022 (limited space available)
--Chicago, Illinois: June 20-22, 2022
--Houston, Texas: July 20-22, 2022
--Pennsylvania/New Jersey: Dates and location coming soon

Please save the date for your preferred location. Registration is expected to be available through StartHereGoPlaces by the first week of December. An email announcement will be made when registration officially opens.

Send any inquiries to apbp@aicpa-cima.com.

Resources for CSEdWeek and a New ASL Tutorial from Scratch

Computer Science Education Week (CSEdWeek) is a global event occurring from December 6-12 to celebrate computer science around the world. Sign up to celebrate CSEdWeek with Beyond the Banana: Make Music with Makey Makey + Scratch, a free webinar where Scratchers can code real world items into entertaining musical projects, and visit the Scratch Activities for Hour of Code, a page for Scratch activities, tutorials, and studios, to find teaching resources for CSEdWeek.

Just in time for CSEdWeek, Scratch is excited to announce that a new tutorial in American Sign Language (ASL) is now available in the Scratch Editor. Scratch is grateful to Deaf Kids Code for leading this initiative and helping to create this video so Scratch can be more accessible for Deaf and hard of hearing Scratchers. See how Scratch is collaborating with Deaf Kids Code to create more equitable learning resources.

Invitation to Join the Scratch Education Collaborative (SEC) Information Sessions

Scratch is thrilled to announce the Scratch Education Collaborative (SEC) application for the 2022-23 cohort.

Scratch is enthusiastically planning for the next cohort which will start summer 2022 and engage participants in a two-year commitment with other participating organizations from around the world. As a member of the SEC, participating organizations will have opportunities to collaborate and learn alongside members of the Scratch Foundation, SEC partners, and other global leaders in creative coding. The SEC aims to engage organizations committed to supporting learners from historically marginalized communities in creating a self-sustaining community of practice committed to furthering equitable creative coding practices.

Scratch is hosting five information sessions on December 10 to introduce the SEC, the work of the 2021-22 cohort, and the SEC learning experience. Please register and join for the session that fits your schedule.

For more information about SEC participant criteria, click here or email Scratch at sec@scratch.mit.edu.

Celebrate #HourofCode with CodeHS—Webinars, Live Workshops, & 20+ Tutorials

Computer Science Education Week this week, December 6-10. To celebrate, CodeHS will be running live Hour of Code workshops for students around the country.

--Monday, December 6: Turtle Graphics with Tracy @ 1:30 pm (MST)
--Tuesday, December 7: Coding for Music @ 9:00 am (MST)
--Wednesday, December 8: Creating Virtual Worlds @ 11:00 am (MST)
--Thursday, December 9: Generating Art with Code @ 8:30 am (MST)
--Friday, December 10: Coding for a Litter-Free Community @ 10:00 am (MST)

Register your class today. If you/your students cannot attend a live workshop, all events will be recorded and saved here.

A How to Run an Hour of Code with CodeHS webinar will be held Thursday, December 2 at 1:30 pm (MST). Join a 30-minute webinar to learn about the free hour-long tutorials on CodeHS, how to pick the right tutorial for your students, and tips on hosting a successful workshop. RSVP today.

Access over 20 free hour-long CodeHS Hour of Code tutorials and lesson plans at codehs.com/hoc including Coding for Art, Building Mobile Apps, and much more. Explore the tutorials today.

Activities & Resources for Computer Science Education Week with Google

To pursue their dreams, students need to be able to solve problems, be creative, and think critically – all skills a student can learn through computer science (CS). This kind of knowledge can shape future artists, small business owners, farmers, and world leaders.

But too few are being exposed to CS, especially students from underrepresented groups and communities.

When interest in computer science is sparked, it can take students anywhere. And often, the most memorable school experiences can happen outside lesson plans—such as going on an eye-opening field trip or listening to an inspirational guest speaker. That is where you come in.

During CSEdWeek, US-based Title 1 educators can sign up for a virtual visit with a Google volunteer to design their own Ignite Experience, including a career conversation, a CS learning experience, and an optional student activity. Sign up here.

Teachers and students can also join a livestream with a Googler who uses CS in their (fun) day job. Their inspirational stories showcase a variety of CS-related career journeys and skill applications. Sign-up to join a livestream event here.

If you cannot join a livestream, you can still teach an Hour of Code to introduce your students to the exciting world of computer science. All activities from Google's programs—including CS First, Applied Digital Skills and Code Next can be found at g.co/codewithgoogle/csedweek.

New CS Connections Curriculum and Accompanying Hour of Code Activities from Code.org

To help students make meaningful connections between CS and other disciplines—and to help teachers from a variety of backgrounds more easily begin teaching the subject—Code.org is introducing a new set of cross-curricular lessons called Computer Science (CS) Connections and two new Hour of Code activities to accompany them.

This curriculum makes the connections between learning computer science and other subjects like language arts, math, and science—with more to come. Through CS Connections, K-12 classrooms can explore their usual subjects in exciting new ways.

CS Connections has options for teachers who would like to incorporate computer science into their lesson plans for other subjects, as well as CS educators who want to reinforce what students are learning in other subjects. The goal is to provide students with a deeper and broader understanding of a particular subject area, a better sense of how computers can be used as a tool to solve human problems, and motivation to learn more about the intersection of CS and other disciplines.

CS Connections is available now, with more lessons coming next year. Interested teachers from any discipline can view cross-curricular lesson plans and try out activities here.

Code.org hopes these lessons expand ideas about what computer science is and what is possible with it. CS is everywhere, and they look forward to helping students and teachers make new and exciting connections to all kinds of subjects through this new curriculum!

This year's new Hour of Code activities from Code.org tie in directly to CS Connections:

The Poem Art Hour of Code activity is also the first lesson in CS Connections' Coding with Poetry module, which allows students to see two subjects—computer science and poetry—in a new way. In Poem Art, students can explore a key element of poetry—mood—by using code to add visuals and movement to classic poems.

In Computer Science 101, the first program many students create outputs an iconic line of text: "Hello World" Hello World equips students with the basic coding skills and confidence to create apps. Hello World Hour of Code activities are recommended as a fun introduction before embarking on the open-ended projects in CS Connections, which require some understanding of computer science basics.

Free International Coding Competition with Prizes, December 1-12
Codementum invites you and your students to join them for the world's largest coding competition for students.

As Hour of Code kicks off during Computer Science Education Week, Codementum will host a coding competition. Codementum wants to raise awareness for coding education by organizing coding competitions for all grade levels across the World. Teachers may sign up now and create a class of students who want to participate. Visit the competition website page to learn more and sign up.

You can join the contest anytime between December 1s and 12, 2021. Even if you do not have coding knowledge, you can quickly learn with the documents prepared and participate in the competition.

Encourage Critical Thinking and Confidence with STEM in the K-12 classroom
Computer Science (CS) Education Week is this week, December 6-10, and focuses on inspiring students, advocating for equity in CS education, and celebrating teacher and student contributions.

If you are looking for a fun way to add STEM in your classroom and nurture problem-solving skills, logic, and creativity in your students, host an Hour of Code with Minecraft's TimeCraft and MakeCode Arcade's Save the Forest.

Also join Microsoft for a professional development session to learn how you can lead Hour of Code lessons or sign up to have a Microsoft Education Expert lead your students through one.

Learn more and register for an Hour of Code lesson here.

Brand New Intuit TurboTax Tax Simulations within EVERFI FinLit

EVERFI is excited to announce the addition of a new Turbo Tax Simulation this month to *Lesson 2, Employment & taxes* of the fully sponsored high school financial literacy course. Trying to understand taxes can be intimidating! Thanks to Intuit TurboTax Tax Simulations, EVERFI now has lessons that are dedicated to providing high school students with the skills and knowledge they need to file taxes.

Along with the above, the financial literacy modules cover a wide variety of additional key topics for high school students, and EVERFI also offers a large catalog of other ready to use digital lessons and materials to engage students and prepare them for the real world.

Reach out to your local Implementation support contact Sean Thomas (sthomas@everfi.com) to learn more or get started.

Career & Technical Education Scholarships—500 Scholarships at up to $2,500 each

The Career & Technical Scholarship Program is funded through the generosity of Horatio Alger Association Members, Jim F. Dicke II and Dennis Washington. Scholarships are awarded to students who have faced and overcome great obstacles in their lives who wish to pursue a career or technical education at an accredited non-profit post-secondary institution in the United States.

Eligibility Criteria:

--Have completed high school (or earned a high school equivalency credential)

--Enrolled in eligible program in Fall 2021

--Exhibit a strong commitment to pursue and complete a career or technical program (up to 2 years) at an accredited non-profit post-secondary institution in the United States

--Demonstrated critical financial need (must be eligible to receive the Federal Pell grant as determined by completion of the FAFSA)

--Demonstrated perseverance in overcoming adversity

--Be under the age of 30

--Be a United States citizen

Funds may be used for tuition, fees, books, and supplies. All scholarship funds are paid directly to the institution on behalf of the recipient.

If you are a school official, you may sign up for the Stay Connected list so that you will be notified of important application updates and to print a poster to put up in your school. To do so, please visit the School Officials page.

The CTE application is now open with a priority deadline of July 15 (applications will continue to be awarded on a rolling basis until all awards have been claimed).

Apply Now.

NASA and Tynker Team up for an Amazing Hour of Code

For the third year running, Tynker has collaborated with NASA to bring you terrific NASA-themed coding activities, live coding events, and professional development opportunities. As always, these are all FREE.

This year, Tynker has

--Enhanced their existing Artemis Mission Hour of Code projects

--Added new data science and art activities for high school in Python and P5.js

--Launched an Hour of Code activity in Spanish for ELL students

--Organized a project walkthrough webinar with a NASA STEM Education Specialist

--Scheduled a host of HoC prep webinars for teachers

--Planned a week-long celebration during CS Education week with live coding sessions with NASA experts.

To get details on all of these (and more), [read the Tynker Hour of Code blog](#) with all the details.

In addition, Tynker also has a series of [live coding events](#) planned where teachers and students can hear from NASA experts on a variety of topics.

These activities and events are available for all grade bands, from Kindergarten to High School.

Nominate a High School Senor for the Cutler-Bell Prize

The [Computer Science Teachers Association](#) (CSTA) has just opened applications for the [2021-2022 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 10, 2022, at 9 a.m. [Learn about the prize](#), review the [application questions](#), or nominate a student to apply using [this form](#).

The ACM/Cutler Bell Prize in High School Computing is designed to recognize talented students intending to continue their higher education in the areas of computer science or technology. The program seeks to promote and encourage computer science and empower young and aspiring leaders to pursue computing challenges outside of the traditional classroom environment.

Students must develop an original computational artifact that engages modern computing technology and computer science. See previous winners to learn about the types of projects selected. This year, to help better prepare students for the application, a google document of all applications is available for review; we encourage students to make a copy to prepare their answers before submitting. Students must develop an original computational artifact that engages modern computing technology and computer science.

The application includes:

--Description of the project and development (two essays of <1,000 words each)
--Project source code and executable file
--A short video showing and describing the project (2 minutes)
--Consent form

A group of educators will review all submissions and judge the project's ingenuity, complexity, relevancy, originality, and the student's desire to further computer science as a discipline.

Please visit the [2021-2022 Cutler-Bell Application](#) site for complete details. Nominations close January 18, 2022.

Fun Facts & Trivia

King O' Kings The Crowning Challenge Game was released in 1990 by Belcom Games.

In the game, the goal is to get as many kings as possible, which are created by capturing the other player's pawns.

Before the game begins, each player sets up all of their player pieces in their safe zone, then, the first player moves one of their pieces into the central square (the arena).

Player pieces move one space diagonally (forward or backwards).

Once a player piece has entered the arena they cannot move back into the safety zone (the area where all of the pieces start).

A player can capture the pawns of an opponent by moving diagonally onto a space occupied by another player.

The captured pawn is added below the capturing player's pawn and the piece is now a prince.

As a prince, the piece can now move two spaces diagonally; however, a prince is not able to capture another player's prince.

Once a prince captures a pawn (one high player piece) or a pawn captures a prince, the piece is turned into a king and is removed from the board.

The king counts as a point for the player who possesses it.

When no more moves can be made, the game ends, and whomever has the most points/kings is declared the winner.

King O' Kings is considered to be a variation of checkers and chess, due to the usage of moving from square to square and the usage of kings and pawns.

Various versions of Checkers date back to thousands of years ago.

Historians know "checkers" was mentioned by the ancient writers Homer and Plato.

It is believed the oldest form of checkers was played around 3,000 B.C.E. and was found by archeologists in an ancient city called Ur in Iraq.

Those who have studied the history of checkers have also found a game called Alquerque, played in ancient Egypt as far back as 1,400 B.C.E.

Today's game of checkers developed by a Frenchman around the start of the 12th century, at that time, the game was called "Fierges" or "Ferses."

Today, most English-speaking countries use a 64-space checkerboard, known known as the short king board version.

In much of Europe and Asia, they use a checkerboard with 100 spaces, called the long king version.

Some people in Canada use a checkerboard with 144 spaces.

For many children, it's the first game they learn how to play.

Teachers have long known that the simple game of checkers can provide significant training in thought and logic.

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