

Help the OPI Build a New Web Site!

The OPI has many exciting projects it's working on to Put Montana Students First in 2017. High on the list of projects is the redesign of the OPI website to better serve Montana schools and students. The redesigned website will be mobile and user friendly, and feature fresh colors and improved search capabilities.

It's important to the OPI to have your feedback as we begin this process. The website is aimed at serving Montana students and no one knows better what students need than parents, school staff, and other involved community members. Please take a few minutes and answer a short, [four-question survey](#) to help us develop a website that meets school and community needs.

Feel free to share this link with your networks - the more feedback we have, the better.

Montana School Meal Photo Contest from Montana No Kid Hungry

[Montana No Kid Hungry](#) (mt.nokidhungry.org) is excited to reach out to you today to share a fantastic opportunity for your school. With support from their partners, the organization has recently launched our #MTschooleats Photo Contest, designed to showcase healthy school food being served across the state, and is open to ALL Montana public school students, faculty, staff, food service personnel, and school volunteers.

The goal of this contest is to highlight successful food service programs that are serving healthy, nutritious meals to their students and to recognize the hardworking members of food service staff that feed Montana's children day in and day out.

First place winners will receive a \$250 Amazon gift card, and the school food service program that prepared the food will be awarded \$500. Runners-up will receive a \$125 Amazon gift card, and \$250 will be awarded to the food service program that prepared the food. Funds awarded to food service programs can be used at the discretion of the food service director, which could allow them to purchase new equipment, buy ingredients to test new menu items, or host an event to honor their staff!

[Montana No Kid Hungry](#) would like to encourage everyone—from students, teachers, and food service staff, to principals, coaches, and superintendents—to submit photos, because every entry is another chance to show your appreciation for the people who feed Montana's kids and to take pride in the food service programs that offer our children healthy and delicious meals.

Photos can be submitted through a [Landing Page](#), which can be accessed through the website at mt.nokidhungry.org, on Facebook at [facebook.com/nokidhungrymontana/](https://www.facebook.com/nokidhungrymontana/), or from Instagram account [@mtnokidhungry](#).

Round 1 for submitting photos runs from January 1 to March 3 and Round 2 will be held March 4-April 30. Submit your photos today.

H&R Block Budget Challenge Seeking Participants for the Spring Challenge

H&R Block is preparing kids for the future. How? By helping teens learn money management and earn scholarships while having some fun along the way. And by giving teachers the tools they need to engage students in learning personal finance.

The H&R Block Budget Challenge aligns with the [National Standards in K-12 Personal Finance Education](#), published by Jump\$tart, and helps teens learn before they earn in a game-like environment.

A free interactive personal finance game that simulates real-life money management.

The [H&R Block Budget Challenge](#) (hrblock.budgetchallenge.com) helps teens get real-world ready from the safety of the classroom. In this learn-by-doing simulation, students pay bills, manage expenses, save money, invest in retirement and pay taxes while competing for \$200,000 in college scholarships.

Awards include:

- 10 opportunities for student scholarships of \$20,000 (five scholarships remain for the spring semester) and
- Student incentives during game play.

Think of Budget Challenge as the Road Test for Personal Finance[®]. Students are in the driver's seat as they immerse into the financial life of a recent college graduate who has been working for about six months. Each student gets a regular paycheck, a checking account, a 401(k) savings account and bills to pay throughout the simulation. Students increase their score by maximizing 401(k) savings, paying bills on time, avoiding penalties and fees like late fees, overdraft fees and finance charges and responding correctly to quiz questions.

For more information about [Budget Challenge](#), visit the [Learn More](#) page.

[H&R Block Budget Challenge](#) needs teachers to bring [H&R Block Budget Challenge](#) to their students by registering at www.hrbds.org, logging in and creating a class for the spring simulations.

Returning teachers can use their existing teacher account from the 2015-2016 school year to [login](#) at www.hrblock.budgetchallenge.com.

Spots are limited, so teachers should register and create a class to reserve a space for their students to experience this free program. [View simulation dates and deadlines](#).

Participating teachers are surveyed at the end of each simulation and their feedback is used to continuously provide improvements to the program. New this year, teachers can:

- Earn [free CEUs](#) by playing Budget Challenge as a student.
- Read the updated Teacher Toolkit for an overview of the simulation.
- Monitor student registration and game play in real-time via the free Android and Apple mobile app.
- Facilitate a class and play along as a student with an integrated Teacher Account.
- Convert student behavior, knowledge and skill into grades with the Grading Assistant
- Use the Teacher Readiness Checklist for a smooth start.
- Enhance the experience with the enhanced Road Map, week-by-week curriculum for teachers.

In addition, teachers can attend a new free live webinar to answer the question, "How do I get started?" [Sign up for a webinar](#) today!

In this webinar, attendees will experience the student registration process and daily activities of a student participating in the game through a virtual tour of the simulation presented by an experienced Budget Challenge team member who has facilitated this game in her classroom. Attendees also will view teacher resources, scoring, grading and receive suggestions on how to implement Budget Challenge.

For more information, visit hrblock.budgetchallenge.com or email the Budget Challenge Help Desk at support@budgetchallenge.fresdhdesk.com.

Virtual Team Challenge Spring 2017 Registration is Now Open--Now also for Macs

Welcome back to a new year! The [Spring 2017 Virtual Team Challenge](http://www.virtualteamchallenge.com) (www.virtualteamchallenge.com) competition begins in roughly 5 weeks. Now is the time to register and engage your students in a Virtual 3D Business World.

And remember Virtual Team Challenge now runs on Macs, Chromebooks as well as Windows PCs.

The Virtual Team Challenge is an entirely **FREE** online, multiplayer business simulation that takes place in the animated 3D world of New City.

The team objective in the simulation is to help the mayor stage the most efficient oil spill recovery effort. Top-performing teams are eligible for prizes for themselves, their teachers, and local charities.

[Virtual Team Challenge](#) will run this Spring from February 15 to March 29.

[Virtual Team Challenge](#) comes complete with lesson plans and in-class exercises which form a curriculum that highlights general business acumen, business ethics, negotiation skills, decision-making processes and accounting while placing a special emphasis on important life/career skills such as teamwork, communication, professionalism and research methods.

Register now at www.virtualteamchallenge.com.

Registration is Now Open for the 2017 CSTA Conference in Baltimore

The Computer Science Teachers Association (CSTA), csteachers.org, is excited to announce registration is now open for the [2017 CTSA Annual Conference](#).

The [2017 CTSA Annual Conference](#), *Identifying Teacher Superpowers*, will be held July 8-11 in Baltimore, Maryland, at the Renaissance Baltimore Harborplace Hotel.

Complete details about the [2017 CTSA Annual Conference](#) can be found at csteachers.org/page/2017Conference, including the conference schedule, registration rates, and lodging information.

CSTA 2017 is a professional development opportunity for computer science and information technology educators working in, or within the K-12 arena who need practical, classroom-focused information to help them prepare their students for the future. Conference content is peer reviewed and peer or industry led, making it

relevant to today's classroom needs. We expanded our conference to span three days, with two days of workshops, more industry-specific sessions, more exhibitors, along with multiple networking opportunities.

For more information about CSTA, or to join for **FREE**, please visit csteachers.org.

Planning to Attend NCCE in March? Check out the Adobe Storytelling Academy

Missoula Sentinel Business Educator Cindy Schultz, along with three other Adobe Education Leaders, will be conducting a two-day [Adobe Storytelling Academy](#), Tuesday and Wednesday, March 21 and 22 as part of the [2017 National Council on for Computer Education \(NCCE\) Conference](#).

The [2017 NCCE Conference](#) will be in Portland, Oregon, March 22-24, at the Oregon Convention Center.

The [Adobe Storytelling Academy](#) is a hands-on, integrated approach to storytelling that will provide participants the opportunity to take a deeper dive into the Adobe products that will unleash their creativity. This two-day academy will model different ways to engage students in storytelling and enable educators to leverage their knowledge of Adobe products to empower students to tell their stories. Participants will be grouped according to interests. Day one will be spent deciding on a theme and gathering and creating original media. On day two, participants will divide according to the strands listed below to create a digital product using a variety of Adobe products. The end of day two will involve a showcase of all work created during the Storytelling Academy.

Spark (mobile) Strand

The goal of the Spark strand is to enable participants to create using Adobe Mobile tools. This will be facilitated through the introduction of three different Adobe Spark (mobile) tools; Spark Post, Spark Page, and Spark Video. After introductory tutorials on the different tools, participants will use the media gathered in day one to create works to support their group's theme.

Design Strand

The goal of the Design strand is to enable different types of media projects with their students according to interests. Adobe Photoshop, InDesign, or Illustrator will be introduced and participants will then have the opportunity to create a digital artifact that incorporates their group's theme. Sessions will be tailored to the participants' interests, but might include photo correction, logo creation, infographics, and electronic publications.

Video Strand

The goal of the Video strand is to enable participants to create using Adobe Premiere Pro CC. After introductory tutorials on the video editing process, participants will use the media gathered in day one to create a video project to support their group's theme.

Visit the website for this Academy at: <https://spark.adobe.com/page/Sc91mE72U1ORB/>.

For more information about the [2017 National Council on for Computer Education \(NCCE\) Conference](#), including registration, lodging options, and a complete schedule of the conference, please visit ncce.org/attend2017.

Ready for 2017? Spring It On with AICPA and Start Here. Go Places.®

Did you make a new year's resolution to be awesome? If so, [Start Here. Go Places.®](#) can help. The new spring calendar is here and it's just the sort of thing your classroom needs to up the awesomeness factor in 2017.

The new, inspiring 2017 spring calendar will not only look amazing on your classroom's wall, but it will also inspire your students to pursue a career in accounting throughout the semester.

Each month, you and your students can learn about a very real, very cool accounting job. There are also ideas for classroom activities and tips for where you can find more free resources and information at [StartHereGoPlaces.com](#).

Start your new year off right with this [new calendar](#) and enjoy an awesome spring semester.

From an Hour of Code to Years of Computer Science--

Did you and your students participate in the Hour of Code last month? If so, thank you from [Code.org](#) for putting computer science in your classroom with your Code Studio account. This critical subject is still not taught in most schools, but you've joined a global teacher-led movement to give every student the opportunity to learn. [Code.org](#) knows how challenging it can be to try a new activity in a classroom—thank you so much for helping to ignite passions for technology and computing.

Teachers like you are changing the face of education, and [Code.org](#) is here to support you. [Code.org](#) offers high-quality, no-cost programs to help you put computer science in your classroom year-round.

You don't need any prior experience. If you're curious about technology and want the skills to teach computer science to your students, you'll get all you need with their [high-quality professional learning](#) — at no cost to you or your school.

Learn more about the offerings for every grade band below:

Computer Science Fundamentals (Grades K-5)

--Teach computer science once a week with fun courses that students love.

--[Code.org](#) offers 1-day [workshops](#) with experts to get you started. Teachers rave about the experience. These are open to all K-5 educators (including librarians, tech ed specialists).

--To [learn more](#) and [Sign up for a workshop](#) near you (at no cost) visit [code.org/educate/curriculum/elementary-school](#).

Computer Science Discoveries (Middle School)

--Teach a semester or year-long introduction to computer science, for students of any background or experience.

--Discover with students through topics such as programming, physical computing, HTML, and data.

--Summer workshops for 7th-9th grade teachers of all backgrounds.

--To [learn more](#) by visiting [code.org/educate/csd](#) and [apply for no-cost professional learning](#) by March 17 at [code.org/educate/professional-learning/cs-discoveries#apply](#).

Computer Science Principles (High School)

- Teach a year-long course, designed for students of any background or experience.
- Explore programming, data analysis, and the Internet with an approachable course that can also be taught as an AP class.
- Summer workshops for high school teachers of all backgrounds.
- Visit code.org/educate/csp to learn more and [apply for no-cost professional learning](http://code.org/educate/professional-learning/cs-principles#apply) by March 17 by going to code.org/educate/professional-learning/cs-principles#apply.

Computer science is a foundation for success in any future career. This is a chance to lead your school and to expand opportunity for your students—and Code.org is here to support you. Please check out Code.org programs, and thank you from Code.org for all you've done to help the movement for K-12 computer science.

Announcing the 2017 ProjectCSGIRLS Competition for Middle School Girls

ProjectCSGIRLS (projectcsgirls.com) is a national 501(c)(3) nonprofit working to close the gender gap in computer science and technology through running a national computer science competition for middle school girls and workshops around the country. Our competition challenges girls to be makers and use tech to develop projects with social impact.

Registration is now open for the [2017 ProjectCSGIRLS Competition](http://2017ProjectCSGIRLSCompetition) for Middle School Girls. Registration for the 2017 ProjectCSGIRLS competition closes February 15, 2017. The deadline to submit projects is April 15, 2017. Mentors will be provided on a first-come, first-serve basis so encourage students to register early.

The ProjectCSGIRLS Competition for Middle School Girls challenges participants in 6th-8th grade to build something using computer science and technology that can help solve an imminent social problem under one of three themes—global health, a safer world, and intelligent technology.

Judges will select semifinalists, finalists, and national winners. All finalists will receive an all-expenses-paid to DC for our national gala, the ultimate celebration of girls in computing, in June 2017 during which they will participate in workshops, listen to guest speakers, tour tech companies, participate in a formal awards ceremony, and showcase their projects to the public.

A link to the online registration form can be found [here](#).

Please help us reach thousands of middle school girls across the country through the 2017 ProjectCSGIRLS Competition for Middle School Girls by encouraging your students to register for the competition and have the unique chance to build a tech project with social impact.

If you would like to get involved as a mentor for competition participants, please sign up [here](#). Any and all questions can be directed to info@projectcsgirls.com.

Save the Date – Montana Economics Challenge 2017

The Helena Branch of the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis will host the 22nd Annual Montana Economics Challenge on Monday, March 6, 2017 in Helena at the Great Northern Hotel.

The Economics Challenge is a one-day contest in which secondary students compete as team members and as individuals for prizes based on their knowledge of economics. The National Competition held in New York City will feature winning teams from four regional economic challenges. One of the four regional competitions, The Heartland Region, is held in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Winning teams from eight other states will meet to determine which teams advance to the national event.

During the first three rounds of competition, students are tested in four areas: macroeconomics, microeconomics, current events/economic applications and international economics. The final round is a timed quiz-bowl play-off between the top two teams in each of two divisions. The first team to answer a majority of the questions wins.

For more information, please contact Helena.MTChallenge@mpls.frb.org or Rhonda Krieger at 406.447.3864.

Earn the Cyber Teacher Professional Development Certificate

Corporate-funded scholarships are now available for teachers to earn the **Cyber Teacher Professional Development Certificate**.

The Cyber Teacher Certificate is a highly relevant, comprehensive, online professional development program that will enable teachers to learn the **Fundamentals of Cybersecurity** and receive **eight (8) hours of CEU's** while connecting their students to the most in-demand STEM career in the world, cybersecurity.

"Cybersecurity job growth is creating career opportunities for students at an unprecedented rate. Educators are actively trying to bring cyber into their classrooms so their students understand their opportunities. Computer Science teachers now have a simple and powerful way to bring this capability into their classroom," remarked Rick Geritz, CEO of LifeJourney, the technology partner of CSTA for the launch of the Cyber Teacher program.

How Teachers Can Register for the Cyber Teacher Certificate Program

Teachers can [register for the Cyber Teacher Certificate program here](#) where they can review the program and learn more about it. There are a limited number of corporate-funded sponsorships that are available so be sure to sign-up today.

To register, please visit <http://bit.ly/cybteacher>.

Google CS4HS Grants for Teacher Professional Development

As a company, Google believes in making information universally useful and accessible for all our users. This translates to the world of education by providing educators with the preparation, resources and support necessary to boost their confidence and skills as computer science educators. Google is committed to supporting computer science teachers through [CS4HS](#) (Computer Science for High School). Funding applications for the [2017-2018 school year](#) are now open.

CS4HS awards support to [PD practitioners](#) (research institutions, universities, community colleges, school districts and educational non-profits such as CSTA chapters) dedicated to creating and delivering professional development (training) in CS to local communities of teachers. Teachers apply what they've learned during their CS4HS workshops to inspire and empower students to not just be consumers but creators of technology.

To learn more about CS4HS awards and how teachers are working with local PD practitioners, please visit the [CS4HS website \(cs4hs.com\)](http://cs4hs.com) or email the CS4HS team at cs4hs@google.com.

EverFi Announces Six \$1,000 Scholarships for Financial Literacy

Did your students complete Vault or FutureSmart? Have them share what they learned in the [Student Blog Contest](#) for a chance to win a \$1,000 529 College Savings Scholarship.

Students completing the [FutureSmart \(everfi.com/k12/future-smart\)](http://everfi.com/k12/future-smart) middle school financial literacy course are eligible for 5 \$1,000 scholarships through the [National Blog Contest](#). Additionally, another \$1,000 scholarship will be awarded for students who have completed the course by March 31, 2017.

FutureSmart empowers students to effectively manage their finances, make sound decisions, and become stewards of their financial future. Through the story-based narrative, students play the mayor of a town as they help local citizens make real-life, personal finance decisions. Interactive exercises challenge students to make choices in real-life scenarios to achieve important goals around saving, education and career planning, and budgeting.

Built around the National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies and the National Jump\$tart Standards for Financial Literacy, this online course provides students with engaging and educational 21st century skills.

To learn more, contact Mick Karls of EverFi at 406.204.1148 or mick@everfi.com.

WBEA 2017 Conference Computer Workshops & Breakout Sessions

Planning to attend, or thinking about attending, the [Western Business Education Association's 2017 Conference](#) in Bozeman in February? Check out the complete listing of hands-on computer workshops and breakout sessions on the [WBEA 2017 Conference](#) website or directly at <https://goo.gl/LepsrU>.

All hands-on computer workshops will be held on either Friday, February 17 or Saturday, February 18 with breakout sessions taking place on Saturday, February 18 and Sunday, February 19.

One new offering this year to WBEA conference attendees will be the option to complete the w!se Teacher Certification for Personal Finance. W!se will be conducting an informational session on Saturday morning with certification taking place Saturday afternoon. For more information about the w!se Teacher Certification for Personal Finance, please visit the [WBEA 2017 Conference](#) website or download the information, including registration requirements, at <https://goo.gl/XcmRR4>.

Graduate Credit Available for WBEA 2017 Conference – Only \$99

The 2017 Western Business Education Association's 2017 Conference will be held in Bozeman, Montana, February 16-20, 2017, and the WBEA 2017 Conference Committee is excited to provide attendees with an added benefit. Attendees of the WBEA 2017 Conference will be able to earn graduate-level college credit from Montana State University Billings. The cost for the credit is \$99.00.

The Montana Business Education Association has partnered with Montana State University Billings to provided WBEA 2017 Conference participants with the option to earn one (1) graduate-level credit from MSU Billings' Extended Campus. Registration and payment for the credit can be completed at <https://goo.gl/IEkuA1>.

The credit, EDCI 589-450, is not applicable to a Master's degree offered by MSU Billings; however, the credit may be used to fulfil K-12 licensure requirements, "lane changes," or other continuing education requirements for professionals.

WBEA 2017 Conference attendees who wish to earn the graduate credit will be required to provide proof of registration and attendance (such as a copy of registration receipt and nametag), a provide a written agenda/synopsis listing all the conference sessions and all the conference-related activities attended (including workshops, tours, networking sessions, etc.), and create a lesson plan in which materials and/or resources gained from the WBEA 2017 Conference are implemented. All materials will need to be submitted by March 1, 2017.

For complete details about the credit offering, including a template for the lesson plan, directions for utilizing the lesson plan template, and a copy of the rubric which will be used to evaluate the lesson plan and lesson materials can be found on the WBEA 2017 Conference website at <https://goo.gl/a0bd6d> along with other details regarding the 2017 event in Bozeman.

Questions regarding the graduate credit offering can be sent to Eric Swenson at eswenson@mt.gov. See you in Bozeman.

W!se Teacher Certification in Personal Finance Available at WBEA 2017

W!se developed a Financial Literacy Teacher Certification Program in 2008. Teachers prepare for the assessment through self-guided study using the W!se Certification in Personal Finance Manual. After preparation teachers take the W!se Teacher Certification in Personal Finance Test. Testers have 1 hour and 15 minutes to complete the comprehensive 75 multiple-choice question assessment. The test evaluates instructor's knowledge on topics that are aligned to state & national standards.

Teachers who pass the test earn a Certification in Personal Finance (CPF). The CPF demonstrates proficiency in personal finance. Certified teachers are subsequently encouraged to enroll their schools in the W!se Financial Literacy Certification Program for students.

The W!se Teacher Certification in Personal Finance Test will be offered during the 2017 WBEA Conference in Bozeman Montana. Certification will be available on Saturday, February 18, beginning at 1:45 pm. Details regarding certification testing and the WBEA 2017 testing schedule, please visit <https://goo.gl/XcmRR4>.

Testers MUST bring a personal WIFI enabled device (laptop, iPad, Chromebook...) to test upon. The cost of testing is \$50. To participate teachers must register prior to the conference. To register please visit SurveyMonkey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CZLJ8TZ> and complete the registration survey.

Payment for the test can be submitted through PayPal, via the link included in the survey, or by contacting David Anderson of w!se (danderson@wise-ny.org, 212-421-2700). Once registration is complete and payment has been submitted testers will receive the W!se Certification in Personal Finance Manual via email.

Working in Support of Education (w!se) was founded in 1998 with a mission to improve the lives of young people through programs that develop financial literacy and readiness for college and the workforce.

Fun Facts and Trivia

Located in the Arabian Gulf, Qatar shares a land borders with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the south-west and is surrounded by the Arabian sea.

Qatar is one of the emirates on the Arabian peninsula. In size it is roughly as big as the US state of Connecticut.

The Global Peace Index ranks features Qatar as one of 30 most peaceful countries in the world, and the most peaceful in the Middle East/North African region.

The earliest known evidence of human habitation in Qatar dates back to the 4th century BC from which artefacts such as rock inscriptions, rock carvings, flint spearheads and even pottery which were unearthed by Danish, British and the French expeditions between 1965 and 1976.

Doha (Ad Dawha) is the capital city of Qatar and means 'roundness', according to the Centre for Geographic Information Systems.

The Pearl Qatar is a luxury development built on an artificial island shaped like a string of pearls. It was built on top of an old pearl diving site and is a great place for people to dine, socialise, shop for luxury apparel or products, or to enjoy a stroll along the marina.

Weekends in Qatar fall on Friday and Saturday. Most stores are usually closed on Friday mornings until the Jum'ah afternoon prayer.

Summer in Doha is usually quite harsh with temperatures flaring up to 120 degrees Fahrenheit.

Oil-rich Qatar is the second richest country in the world, after Lichtenstein, although it is one of the smallest countries in the world. Qatar also has the third largest gas reserves in the world.

Shops in Qatar are usually open in the morning until noon and then close for a long lunch break and only open in the late afternoon again.

Qataris eat their main meal of the day at lunchtime. Karak tea is served after meals; the rich milky tea is laced with Cardamom. The Friday midday meal, after prayers, is usually a time for the whole family to get together.

In Qatar it is traditional to eat a large spoonful of honey at night and in the morning. The people of Qatar relish fresh dates and picanuts.

Traditional Qatari food is influenced by Indian and Iranian cuisine. Qatari speciality dishes include Ghuzi, Motabel, Biriani, Tabouleh and Hummus.

Many Qataris do not use cutlery. The meal is served in a large dish and the diners use bread to scoop-up their food.

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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"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