



**MFEC**  
Montana Financial  
Education Coalition

**MFEC Quarterly Board Meeting**  
**301 S Park Ave, Rm. #342 Helena MT**  
**June 6, 2023, 1-3:30p.m.**

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### **Meeting Agenda**

- 1:00 p.m. Call to Order to Establish Quorum
- Introductions
  - Board of Directors/Delegates List
- 1:10 p.m. Approval of March 2023 Meeting Minutes (**Voting Item**)
- 1:15 p.m. Treasurer's Report
- Bank Account Check Register
- 1:20 p.m. General Business
- Strategic Planning
    - Review mission, goals and objectives and by-laws (**Voting Item**)
    - Native American Committee (**Voting Item**)
  - Conflict of Interest Policy (must be signed by all directors)
  - Mini-grant applications
  - Jump\$tart State Coalition Leaders meeting recap
  - Jump\$tart teacher scholarships
  - House Bill 535 – Revising education laws to provide a definition of “financial literacy.”
- 2:15 p.m. Break
- 2:30 p.m. Conference Committee Update
- 2:40 p.m. Elder Fraud and Financial Exploitation Prevention Committee Update
- 2:50 p.m. K-12 Committee Update
- 3:00 p.m. Outreach Committee Update
- 3:10 p.m. member Go-Around: Share Success/Challenge

**Adjourn by 3:30 p.m.**

**Next Meeting: September 5, 2023**



**Board of Directors**  
**(As of 4/14/23)**

No.	Name	Organization/Location	Title	Committees	Phone/Email
1	Jennell Huff, President	Bank of the Rockies (Wilsall)	Community Outreach Coordinator	Elder Fraud Prevention (Chair), Financial Review (Chair) and K-12	406-686-4204 <a href="mailto:jhuff@botr.bank">jhuff@botr.bank</a>
2	Sean Thomas, Vice President	EverFi (Arlee)	Senior Schools Manager	K-12	208-731-7746 <a href="mailto:stthomas@everfi.com">stthomas@everfi.com</a>
3	Bruce Brensdal, Treasurer	Retired Montana Board of Housing (Jefferson City)		Conference and Financial Review	406-459-1215 <a href="mailto:bbrensdal@gmail.com">bbrensdal@gmail.com</a>
4	Karissa Trujillo, Secretary	Homeward, Inc. (Missoula)	Operations and Program Director	Conference	406-532-4663 x 12 <a href="mailto:karissa@homeward.org">karissa@homeward.org</a>
5	Chris Romano, Immediate Past President	Division of Banking and Financial Institutions (Helena)	Non-Depository Bureau Chief	Outreach (Chair) and Financial Review	406-841-2928 <a href="mailto:cromano@mt.gov">cromano@mt.gov</a>
6	Rhonda Krieger	Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, Helena Branch (Helena)	Business Analyst – Regional Outreach & Operations	K-12, Financial Review, Conference and Native American	406-447-3864 <a href="mailto:rhonda.krieger@mpls.frb.org">rhonda.krieger@mpls.frb.org</a>
7	Ryan Egebrecht	Chase (Helena)	Private Client Banker	Elder Fraud Prevention	406-209-1858 <a href="mailto:ryan.egebrecht@chase.com">ryan.egebrecht@chase.com</a>
8	Troy Downing	Office of the Montana State Auditor (Helena)	Commissioner of Securities and Insurance		406-444-2040 <a href="mailto:troy.downing@mt.gov">troy.downing@mt.gov</a>
9	Tim Summers	AARP (Helena)	State Director	Elder Fraud Prevention	406-457-4701 <a href="mailto:tsummers@aarp.org">tsummers@aarp.org</a>
10	Mary Palkovich	Montana Board of Housing (Helena)	Mortgage Servicing Program Manager		406-841-2857 <a href="mailto:mpalkovich@mt.gov">mpalkovich@mt.gov</a>

11	Guinevere Ayers	First Interstate BancSystem Foundation (Billings)	Senior Program Officer		406-255-5284 <a href="mailto:guinevere.ayers@fib.com">guinevere.ayers@fib.com</a>
12	Joel Schumacher	MSU Extension – (Bozeman)	Extension Economic Associate Specialist	Conference (Chair)	406-994-6637 <a href="mailto:jschumacher@montana.edu">jschumacher@montana.edu</a>
13	Dax Schieffer	Montana Council on Economic Education (Helena)	Executive Director	Conference, K-12	406-624-6617 <a href="mailto:mcee@montana.edu">mcee@montana.edu</a>
14	Gayla Randel	Office of Public Instruction (Helena)	Family & Consumer Sciences Education Specialist	K-12	406-431-2117 <a href="mailto:gayla.randel@mt.gov">gayla.randel@mt.gov</a>
15	Rosie Kiernan	NeighborWorks (Great Falls)	Homeownership Director		406-761-5861 <a href="mailto:rkiernan@nwgf.org">rkiernan@nwgf.org</a>
16	Jacob Griffith	MT Office of the Attorney General, DOJ, Office of Consumer Protection (Helena)	Supervising Attorney, OCP		406-444-1968 <a href="mailto:jacob.griffith2@mt.gov">jacob.griffith2@mt.gov</a>
17	Lianna Waller	DPHHS – Adult Protective Services (Missoula)	Interim Bureau Chief	Elder Fraud Prevention	406-830-5304 <a href="mailto:lwaller@mt.gov">lwaller@mt.gov</a>
18	Skyler Manley	Rural Dynamics	Volunteer Coordinator	Outreach	406-441-4704 <a href="mailto:smanley@ruraldynamics.org">smanley@ruraldynamics.org</a>

## Delegations

Name	Organization/Location	Title	Committee	Phone/Email
Amberly Pahut	First Interstate Bank Foundation (Billings)	Executive Director		406-255-5302 <a href="mailto:amberly.pahut@fib.com">amberly.pahut@fib.com</a>
Joe DeFilippis	Montana Board of Housing (Helena)	Operations Manager		406-841-2826 <a href="mailto:joseph.defilippis@mt.gov">joseph.defilippis@mt.gov</a>
Linda Leffler	Division of Banking and Financial Institutions (Helena)		Conference and Outreach	406-841-2932 <a href="mailto:lleffler@mt.gov">lleffler@mt.gov</a>
Al Ward	AARP (Billings)	Volunteer	Elder Fraud and Native American	406-422-9759 <a href="mailto:aeward.aw@gmail.com">aeward.aw@gmail.com</a>
Pam O'Reilly	Montana Bankers Association (Helena)	V.P. of Operations and Member Services	Elder Fraud Prevention and Native American	406-441-4703 <a href="mailto:pam@montanabankers.com">pam@montanabankers.com</a>
Mark Mattioli	Office of the Montana State Auditor	Deputy Chief Legal Counsel		406-444-2406 <a href="mailto:mark.mattioli@mt.gov">mark.mattioli@mt.gov</a>

## Committee Assignments

**Conference:** Joel Schumacher (Chair), Bruce Brensdal, Karissa Trujillo, Rhonda Krieger, Cheryl Cohen, Chris Romano, Dax Schieffer, and Linda Leffler

**Elder Fraud Prevention:** Jennell Huff (Chair), Marsha Goetting, Ryan Egebrecht, Tim Summers, Pam O'Reilly, and Liana Waller

**Financial Review:** Jennell Huff (Chair), Chris Romano, Bruce Brensdal, and Rhonda Krieger

**K-12:** Gayla Randel (Co-Chair), Sean Thomas (Co-Chair), Rhonda Krieger, and Jennell Huff

**Native American:** Tonya Plummer (Chair), Rhonda Krieger, Pam O'Reilly, Al Ward, Linda Leffler, and Shawn Spruce

**Outreach (Marketing):** Chris Romano (Chair), Skyler Manley, and Linda Leffler

## **MFEC Quarterly Board Meeting**

**March 7, 2023, 1-4 p.m.**

### **Directors on Teams Call:**

- Jennell Huff (Bank of the Rockies), President
- Sean Thomas (EverFi), Vice President
- Bruce Brensdal (Retired, Montana Board of Housing), Treasurer
- Karissa Trujillo (Homeword, Inc.), Secretary
- Chris Romano (State of Montana, Division of Banking and Financial Institutions)
- Troy Downing (Commissioner of Securities and Insurance)
- Rhonda Krieger (Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, Helena Branch)
- Gayla Randel (Office of Public Instruction-OPI)
- Dax Schieffer (Montana Council on Economic Education)
- Rosie Kiernan (NeighborWorks)
- Ryan Egebrecht (Chase)
- Joel Schumacher (MSU Extension)
- Tim Summers (AARP)
- Summer Red (AFCPE)
- Guinevere Ayers (First Interstate Bank Foundation)

### **Proxies and Guests on Zoom Call:**

- Mary Palkovich (Montana Board of Housing)

### **Directors Absent:**

- Skyler Manley (Rural Dynamics)
- Tonya Plummer (Island Mountain Development Group)
- Jacob Griffith (MT Office of the Attorney General)

## **Meeting Agenda/Minutes**

The meeting was called to order at 1:08 p.m. Directors introduced themselves and a quorum was established. An amendment to the minutes was noted with changing Bruce's organization name and correcting the attendance at the meeting include Summer Red. Joel made a motion to approve the minutes as amended and Ryan seconded. Motion carried to approve the minutes as amended.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Bruce gave an update on the current finances. There is \$8,139 in checking after all bills paid and checks have cleared in 2022. The balance in the CD is at about \$20,450, for a total of \$28,590. He provided a review of the bank account check register and noted that all transactions have been reconciled to the bank statement. Bruce stated that the CD has been renewed for a 13-month term at 3.5%. He attempted to file Form 990-N with the IRS but received an error message. Chris stated that he would reach out to Jump\$Start to inquire if any other affiliates have had problems filing the 990. There were no questions.

### **General Business**

Discussion about recruitment of new board members and pending board changes:

- Mary Palkovich - Montana Board of Housing – Mortgage Servicing Program Manager
  - Bruce motioned to accept Mary as new MFEC Board Member, Dax seconded. Motion passed unanimously.
- Summer Red resigned from the board of directors.
- Jennell stated that she would reach out to Tonya Plummer because she is no longer working with the Montana Native Growth Fund.

### **Recruitment of New Board Members**

There was general discussion amongst the board regarding individuals and/or organizations to target for representation on the MFEC Board which included:

- Montana's Credit Unions
- Montana Bankers Association – Replacement for Skyler
- OPI – Indian Education Division

### **Social Media and Website Updates**

Skyler Manley was unable to attend the meeting and did not provide an update on MFEC's social media and website. Chris asked if anyone else would be willing to help update the website and social media accounts. Guinevere volunteered to assist.

### **Mini-Grants**

There was general discussion amongst the board regarding when to open applications for mini grants. It was decided that the MFEC will update the website and send out a communication to accept mini grants through April 15<sup>th</sup>.

### **Other Business**

- **Strategic planning**
  - Sean raised a question regarding the future and direction of the MFEC. After some board discussion, the Executive Leadership team stated that it would focus on conducting a strategic planning session during the next board meeting in June.
- **Financial Education Program Directory**
  - Gayla raised the idea of creating a Financial Education Program Directory on the MFEC website. This would be a resource for events going on state-wide. This topic should be discussed again during K-12 Committee Meetings and/or future Board meetings.
- **Personal Finance Challenge (MCEE)**
  - Dax will send a proposal to the MFEC to help send the winning team to Cleveland for the national competition in June. It is expected that the MFEC's contribution will be about \$2,500.

### **Elder Fraud and Financial Exploitation Prevention Committee Update**

- Jennell mentioned that she will be planning an event for Bank of the Rockies on World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (June 15<sup>th</sup>).

- [AARP Prepare to Care](#) is a great resource with family caregiving guides.
- The Montana Aging Services Bureau will be hosting the [Legal Document Clinic Season](#) again this year; the program serves older adults aged 60+ as well as any enrolled tribal members. At the Legal Document Clinics, trained legal professionals assist participants in completing their estate planning documents at no cost to the participant; legal professionals assist older adults draft, review, notarize and copy each document.
- Jennell stated that [HB 421](#) was tabled in committee. The was titled, Revise laws related to reporting financial abuse of elderly and disabled persons.

#### **Native American Committee Update**

- The committee update was tabled since the Committee Chair was unable to dial into the meeting.

#### **Conference Committee**

- Joel stated that we will work on scheduling a conference committee meeting and noted that a priority will be setting a date for the 2024 Conference and identifying a keynote speaker.

#### **K-12 Committee Update**

- Gayla previously spoke to need for a consolidated Financial Education Program Directory.
- House Bill 535 titled, Revising education laws to provide a definition of "financial literacy. Passed house and is being transmitted to the Senate. Continue to monitor and provide update for June meeting.
- Google search for Montana financial literacy. Should we explore how to own this and related searches?

#### **Outreach Committee Update**

- Chris discussed launching another contest in the spring or fall for high school and/or middle school students that can be leveraged as art for the MFEC's 2024 calendar.
- He will work with Skyler and Guinevere on updates to the MFEC website and social media feeds.

#### **Member Go-Around: Share Success/Challenge**

- Dax – Highlighted the Personal Finance Challenge and partnership with the MFEC on sending the winning team to the national competition. Dax spoke to success reaching students with the stock market game and personal finance challenge. He noted the challenge of determining how to optimize resources to assist high schools with potential unfunded mandate to implement financial education class.
- Joel – Marsha is still conducting her estate planning sessions. Extension offices are well staffed after recent hiring.
- Sean – Noted new course offerings from EverFi in cryptocurrency and for middle school students. He shared that EverFi was acquired by Blackbaud, but there will be no changes to their daily operations.
- Mary – Foreclosures have been low. There is a Montana Homeowner Assistance Fund that can help struggling homeowners.
- Troy – Success: Work on NASAA Senior Issues Committee. Great resources on [NASAA Serve our Seniors webpage](#). Participation on NAIC American Indian and Alaska Native Liaison Committee. This committee has helped produce well-crafted communications targeted at our Native populations. Recruiting an outreach coordinator. Cryptocurrency education is critical for

consumers. Challenges: Recruitment and retention of staff. Using an internship program to help cultivate talented students.

- Gayla – OPI: Resource lists for teachers would be ideal. This is a local decision, so curriculum promotion is not permitted. FCS: Project grants for student projects. Financial Fitness Program CD purchase would be nice for FCCLA teachers. Other: Create financial literacy program directory.
- Guinevere – First Interstate Bank is working on activities for Teach Children to Save Day. She also volunteered to help update the MFEC website and social media feeds.
- Rhonda – Noted that the Federal Reserve has ended its Covid-19 visitor policy which will make it easier for the Fed to host meetings again.
- Jennell – Working on youth ag outreach which is part of the Bank's activities in April during Financial Literacy Month and for Teach Children to Save Day. Collected 425 books as part of I love to read month/day. Books were distributed to local schools. Personal challenge losing my grandmother to dementia and seeing issues with cognitive decline and seeing importance of estate planning. Planning for World Elder Abuse Day event (June 15<sup>th</sup>).

Adjourned 3:28 p.m.

Next Meeting: June 6, virtual and in-person (301. S. Park, Helena)



## Check Register

Montana Financial Education Coalition - Bank Account

[illegible]

## Check Register

Montana Financial Education Coalition - Bank Account

[illegible]

# Montana Financial Education Coalition

## Conflict of Interest Policy

### General Policy

The Board of Directors (Directors) of the Montana Financial Education Coalition (MFEC) must read and sign the Conflict of Interest Policy, agreeing to abide by the policy.

Directors shall refrain from engaging in any activity that may create a conflict of interest between themselves and the goals and mission of the MFEC. We recognize that throughout the ongoing course of carrying out our individual business or the business of our employer, we may encounter times when we are in conflict. At the earliest point of recognizing a conflict, the Board member must disclose in writing (e-mail is acceptable) to the President and/or Vice President any such conflict of interest and refrain from voting on matters that may result in a benefit to the member, their company, or their organization.

Conflicts of interest may fall into many categories. The following incomplete list identifies several examples:

1. Business conflicts – conducting business in the name of the MFEC that results in direct benefit to the individual or their business, etc.
2. Ethical conflicts – using the MFEC name to gain access to individuals or businesses, etc.
3. Relationships with others who may receive benefit – while representing the MFEC you refer business to others with whom you have a relationship and as a result they or you receive benefit, etc.
4. Non-adherence to the general principles of ethical behavior and by Robert's Rules of Order.

### Procedure for Managing Conflicts

1. Following disclosure of a possible conflict of interest, the Directors shall determine whether a conflict of interest exists and, if so the Directors shall vote to authorize or reject the transaction or take any other action deemed necessary to address the conflict and protect the MFEC's best interests. Votes shall be by a majority vote without counting the vote of any interested director, even if the disinterested directors are less than a quorum, provided that at least one consenting director is disinterested.
2. A Director shall not participate in any discussion or debate of the Board of Directors, or of any committee or subcommittee thereof in which the subject of discussion is a contract, transaction, or situation in which there may be a perceived or actual conflict of interest. However, they may be present to provide clarifying information in such a discussion or debate unless objected to by any present board or committee member.

3. Anyone in a position to make decisions about spending the MFEC's resources (i.e., transactions such as purchase contracts) – who also stands to benefit from that decision – has a duty to disclose that conflict as soon as it arises (or becomes apparent); s/he should not participate in any final decisions.
4. A copy of this policy shall be given to all Directors, volunteers or other key stakeholders upon commencement of such person's relationship with the Coalition or at the official adoption of the policy. Each Director and volunteer shall sign and date the policy at the beginning of her/his term of service or employment with the Coalition. Failure to sign does not nullify the policy.
5. The fact that a conflict was managed and its outcome will be documented in the Coalition's Board meeting minutes if the conflict was related to a Director.
6. The President of the Board will monitor proposed or ongoing transactions of the organization (e.g., contracts with vendors and collaborations with third parties) for conflicts of interest and disclose them to the Board as appropriate, whether discovered before or after the transaction has occurred.

### **Confidentiality**

Each Director or volunteer shall exercise care not to disclose confidential information acquired in connection with disclosures of conflicts of interest or potential conflicts, which might be averse to the interests of the MFEC. Furthermore, Directors and volunteers shall not disclose or use information relating to the business of the Coalition for their personal profit or advantage or the personal profit or advantage of their family member(s).

### **Acknowledgement**

By signing below, I hereby acknowledge that I have carefully read and agree to all the terms contained above in this Conflict of Interest Policy. If I have any such conflicts to declare, I shall attach them in writing to this signed policy.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## MFEC 2023 Mini-Grant Submissions

Organization	Requested Amount	Requested Funding Date	Summary/Target Population
Business Professionals of America, MT	\$750.00	10/1/2023	BPA will host a Fall Leadership Conference (October 1-2, 2023) in Fairmont, MT for middle school and high school students. BPA Montana Association is hoping the MFEC will once again be our sponsor for the BPA Biz Bowl Financial Literacy competition. We have encouraged our students to participate in this activity during the past five years. Our intent is to award scholarship monies to the top three teams. We hope that you will consider a donation of \$750, which would allow us to award scholarship monies for our Biz Bowl winners as well as for our Shark Tank winners. These monies will help the students with their registration fee to attend the 2024 State BPA Leadership Conference. This year we anticipate 330 BPA members to attend the 2023 Fall Leadership Conference.
East Helena High School	\$746.30	4/12/2023	For our High School to meet this mission, we are requesting grant funding to contribute towards a classroom set of calculators for our business classes. Students complete Career Planning, Marketing, Introduction to Business, Personal Finance, Small Business Management, Computer Programming, Technology Skills, and Accounting I and II. Each of these courses need calculators to assist with class assignments throughout each semester. Currently, students use their phones for assignments. However, we would like to increase the integrity of the assignments and assessments by requiring calculators. These calculators will potentially impact 120 Personal Finance students per year. There is also the potential of impacting up to approximately 400 students each semester throughout our department.
Stevensville High School	\$750.00	4/12/2023	I want to be able to give students a financial literacy book when they leave my personal finance class their junior year. I feel that students need additional financial information for future decisions and this can help them continue to learn about financial decisions as well as more information about investing and retirement. I'm looking at <i>How To Adult: Personal Finance for the Real World</i> , written by Jake Cousineau. He is a personal finance teacher as well as an author. I'm looking at 100 students per year (mostly Juniors) as Personal Finance is a graduation requirement at Stevensville High School.
	<b>Total: \$2,246.30</b>		

## **2023 Jump\$tart State Coalition Leaders Meeting**

Washington, D.C.

April 24-26, 2023

*Re-igniting the flame and finding your North Star*

Twenty-five Jump\$tart state coalition leaders converged on Washington, D.C. April 24-26, 2023, for the annual state coalition leaders meeting and awards luncheon.

Founded in 1995, the Jump\$tart Coalition was based on an idea credited to Chairman and CEO of the Ford Motor Credit Corporation at the time, William E. Odom. The first meeting was organized by then President and CEO of the American Financial Services Association, H. Randy Lively, was intended to “develop a strategic plan for improving the quality and extent of curriculum modules for personal finance education in the nation’s schools, grades K-12”. Today Jump\$tart’s highest honor, the William E. Odom Visionary Leadership Award is awarded annually, and Mr. Odom remains a director emeritus of the national board.

In 1997, the Jump\$tart Coalition was incorporated as an independent non-profit organization. Realizing that they couldn’t do it alone, each state was encouraged to create their own state coalition under the Jump\$tart coalition. In Montana, that is the Montana Financial Education Coalition (MFEC). In 2016, Mike Grove encouraged me to join the MFEC board, and during my second meeting I pitched the idea to build an elder fraud detection and prevention network with the partners sitting around the table. During my third meeting, was asked to step forward as the Vice-President by Dr. Marsha Goetting, one of the founding members of the MFEC. In December 2022 I was elected president of the MFEC.

Earlier this week, I was able to travel to Washington, D.C. for the annual State Coalition Leaders and General Partners meetings, which culminates in an annual awards luncheon. This year, State Coalition of the Year was awarded to Alabama Jump\$tart for their strength and tenacity when they suddenly found themselves left with one board member. Michelle Singelton was awarded the William E. Odom Visionary Leadership Award. MFEC is a past State Coalition of the Year award winner, having won in 2015 under the leadership of Diana Holshue. I intend to make Montana the second coalition to win the award twice.

State Coalitions incur no cost for attendance, other than travel and lodging, which Mike has been gracious enough to cover for me. Meals were provided at no charge, other than anything that we chose to do on our own. I was fortunate to be invited to sit with the ABA leadership at the awards ceremony and met Lindsay Torrico and Kelsey Havemann, two individuals fiercely dedicated to financial education and empowerment.

Phenomenal speakers were enlisted to bring networking and brainstorming sessions of these state leaders to life. Dave Mancl, President of the Wisconsin coalition, lead the breakout session regarding operations, partner and board recruitment, retention, and succession. It was interesting to learn of the different states’ successes and challenges in these areas. Three big takeaways for me from this session:

- 1) It is vitally important to actively engage committees.
- 2) Teacher needs assessments are an important, yet often overlooked, tool to determine how we can better assist teachers in the realm of financial education. What do they need?
- 3) If we are going to BE something, we need to DO something.

Former ABA Foundation President Corey Carlisle, who is now the Jump\$Start national Board Chairman, next led a discussion titled, "Finding Your North Star as a State Coalition Leader". Again, key takeaways for me from this session:

- 1) Words have meaning. Mean what you say and do what you mean.
- 2) Understand your own responsibility.
- 3) Do something MEANINGFUL to help reignite your spark.

John Doyle, of Doyle McDonald, led an in-depth discussion and interactive session on how to lead, promote, and craft meetings. This was AMAZING! He went around the room and asked each person to tell their story of how they came to be with their state coalitions, or at least how they came to be advocates for financial empowerment. I told my story about witnessing two cases of elder fraud in our office with my own eyes and approaching Barb and Mike about what we can do to help. The rest, well, we all know that story now. It was during this discussion that I learned that Montana is one of only three state coalitions that focus on financial education from cradle to grave. I also met Louisiana's state coalition leader, Blaine Grimes, who I had a great conversation with about what each of our state's do in the elder fraud/abuse prevention space. We are going to schedule a time to visit with each other in the next few weeks and see what we can learn from each other. Key takeaways for me from this session:

- 1) Take the hit as a gift. Change your mindset from failure to learning.
- 2) How do we engage our students to become student mentors in financial education?
- 3) What is your calling? Find your passion, tell your story.
- 4) Change your messaging. When we improve our messaging, we empower.
- 5) Bring energy, don't just go along for the ride.
- 6) Everybody deserves to know the rules of the game.

Day two was as invigorating, if not more so than day one. Dr. Sarah Newcomb is a Behavioral Economist and founder of Thrive Financial Empowerment Center. MFEC was fortunate to have had her speak at one of our conferences in the past and she was just as phenomenal as before. She touched on the disparities that COVID uncovered, and interestingly enough had an entire section on increased suicidal ideation as a result of financial stress and doubt. The numbers were staggering. Mike Sheffer, retired teacher of 33 years and Director of Education for FoolProof Foundation was the next speaker. Again, great information and he spoke about how important it is to embrace technology and tell your story. It's important to meet the teachers where they are and to support them. Key takeaways:

- 1) We had no idea we were already on the right path with incorporating suicide awareness and prevention into our financial education programs, but we are ahead of the game here.
- 2) Another theme: Tell your story.
- 3) Collaborate, Collaborate, Collaborate
- 4) Improve your messaging and bring energy.
- 5) Do what you know how to do. If you stumble, get back up and rebuild.

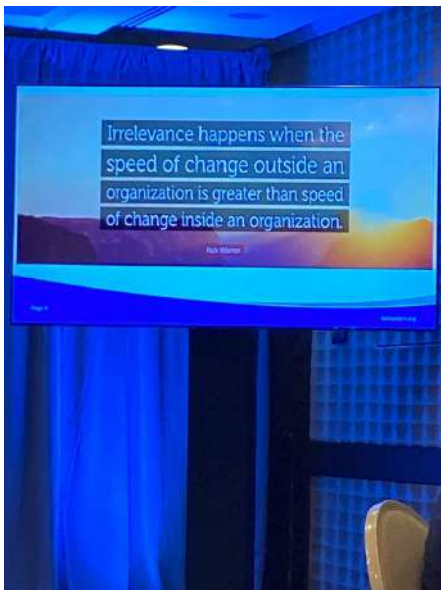
I am attaching a few photos from my days in D.C. I already have plans to meet with other state leaders and ask about their financial literacy requirements in their states. As a side note, legislation requiring financial literacy for graduation from Montana accredited high schools is awaiting the governor's signature. Once signed, Montana will be the 17<sup>th</sup> state in the union to adopt such requirements. I have thoughts as to how we can help support our teachers and offer to them what we do best, empower our communities and assist them with their overall health and wellbeing.



Varyny opens the meeting



Build, Grow, Succeed.



Powerful statement



OR, CA, MT, and VA state coalition leaders





AN ACT GENERALLY REVISING EDUCATION LAWS; ESTABLISHING A LEGISLATIVE GOAL FOR PUBLIC ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS TO SUPPORT INSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL LITERACY; AND AMENDING SECTION 20-1-102, MCA.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

**Section 1.** Section 20-1-102, MCA, is amended to read:

**"20-1-102. Legislative goals for public elementary and secondary schools.** It is the goal of the legislature that Montana's public elementary and secondary school system, in cooperation with parents or guardians, create a learning environment for each student that:

- (1) develops a sound foundation for literacy and numeracy during the early years that is built upon and reinforced throughout the educational experience;
- (2) furthers the ability to reason critically, creatively, and strategically;
- (3) fosters the ability to effectively understand and communicate ideas, knowledge, and thoughts;
- (4) develops a sense of personal and civic responsibility;
- (5) provides an in-depth understanding of the American political, social, and economic systems and the historical context from which they arose;
- (6) provides familiarization with political, social, and economic systems found elsewhere in the world;
- (7) develops a strong work ethic, postsecondary readiness, and employment skills; ~~and~~
- (8) encourages a healthy lifestyle; and
- (9) supports instruction of financial literacy, where students obtain the knowledge and skills required to succeed financially."

- END -

I hereby certify that the within bill,  
HB 535, originated in the House.

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Chief Clerk of the House

---

Speaker of the House

Signed this \_\_\_\_\_ day  
of \_\_\_\_\_, 2023.

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President of the Senate

Signed this \_\_\_\_\_ day  
of \_\_\_\_\_, 2023.

HOUSE BILL NO. 535

INTRODUCED BY B. MITCHELL, J. HAMILTON, J. COHENOUR, F. ANDERSON, D. FERN, M. BERTOGLIO,  
B. LER, K. SEEKINS-CROWE, J. FULLER, P. FLOWERS, G. HERTZ, D. SALOMON, J. ELLSWORTH, K.  
BOGNER, T. FALK, D. ZOLNIKOV, D. EMRICH, T. SMITH

AN ACT GENERALLY REVISING EDUCATION LAWS; ESTABLISHING A LEGISLATIVE GOAL FOR PUBLIC  
ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS TO SUPPORT INSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL LITERACY; AND  
AMENDING SECTION 20-1-102, MCA.

## MFEC Planning

In attendance: Chris Romano, Joe DeFilippis, Mary Palkovich, Dax Schieffer, Joel Schumacher

Not in Attendance but Expressed an Interest in assisting: Tim Summers, Karissa Trujillo, Gayla Randel

Basic Background: The event has typically been held in February or March. Often in Helena but it has been in Bozeman and Billings before. In Helena we have typically used the Delta Hotel. The format is often plenary sessions in the morning with breakout sessions in the afternoon. Some years we have also offered an evening event the night before. Attendance is typically in the 60 to 100 range. I don't think we typically reserve hotel rooms (I'll have to look an old hotel contract) ...if we do reserve rooms it is simply a block and people pay on their own.

Funding: Typically MFEC Board Member Organizations provide sponsorship. The total in recent years has been about \$10,000. We also charge registration for attendees (\$75 last time), which raised about \$2,000. Some MFEC member organizations have also supported by purchasing lunch or printing the programs for the day. The proceeds have funded mini-grants.

### Dates:

The group started to discuss dates that might work. Tentatively we are looking at 3/18, 3/19, 3/5 or 3/6 as possible date. Dax was going to check that against some school related dates. We can discuss at the June MFEC Board Meeting.

### Location:

The Delta and the Great Northern were discussed. Joe D. and Joel S. will look into these options.

### Keynote Speakers and Themes:

Possible Theme would be Financial Ed in Schools partly due to recent legislation.

-Jenell suggested a few speakers: Sarah Newcomb and Michael Sheffer.

-Dax and Mary will explore this topic further. We can discuss further at the June board meeting.

