GEAR UP Weekly Widgets 7/16/15

*Spring 2016 ACT Test Dates Reminder*
April 19, 2016: Initial Test Date
April 19 – May 3, 2016: Accommodations Window
May 3, 2016: Makeup Day

_____________________________

*ACT ASPIRE Test Window Reminder:*
The Fall 2015 Summative Test Window is October 12, 2015 – December 4, 2015

Essential Pre-Implementation Steps

- Visit the [ACT Aspire Landing Page](#) for an overview of available training resources, manuals, exemplars, technology set-up, support, and more.
- Visit the [ACT Aspire End-to-End Flowchart](#) here for step-by-step instructions for administering ACT Aspire.

**Please note that Montana GEAR UP will supply and upload student data files to ACT prior to testing using 2015-16 student rosters from GEARS. It is important to have rosters updated in GEARS as soon as possible after August 15 to ensure an accurate reflection of current 8th and 10th grade students.**

*If you are computer-based testing (CBT) you must* perform Step 1 below prior to **August 14, 2015**.
Please note that there are new Technology Requirements for Fall 2015.

*If you are paper-based testing (PBT), please start with Step 2 below.*

**Step 1.** Use the [SystemCheck for TestNav](#)* tool to assess the readiness of your student testing workstations. SystemCheck is Java-based, and will require you to accept and run a Java applet. Use SystemCheck with a supported browser from at least one representative student workstation by August 14, 2015.

- Fill out the [Technology Readiness Survey](#). Using this, the Implementation Team staff will check for major mismatches between requirements and your technology setup.
- If you determine your environment is not conducive to computer-based testing at this time, and need to switch to paper-based testing, please call 1-855-730-0400, option 0, no later than **8 weeks prior to your intended test date**.
- **Attention Google Chrome Browser users:** Please read this document: [Google to Disable NPAPI for the Chrome browser in 2015](#)

* TestNav is the test delivery engine for the ACT Aspire assessment.

**Step 2.** Review the [Test Delivery Schedule](#) for due dates associated with your chosen testing window. These dates may change due to operational contingencies. You will be notified immediately should there be any changes.
Training
ACT Aspire recognizes that a high quality-training program directly impacts the success of the student testing experience. The following training resources can all be found by clicking here: http://actaspire.pearson.com/allresources.html
- Live webinar training sessions (the schedule can be found in the Calendar of Training Events)
- Online documentation
- Online and on-demand training videos

*Sarah at Teaching Channel (teachingchannel.org)*
Exploring Emigration: Cultural Identity
Grades 6-8 / Social Studies / Film
CCSS: ELA.SL.6.2  ELA.SL.7.2
An interesting short video using National Geographic video to engage middle school students in meaningful discussions about similarities and differences between themselves and immigrants. Check out www.teachingchannel.org for more great resources.

*A Middle School Start*
July 16, 2015
By Jacqueline Thomsen
For some students, plans to attend college take shape during high school. But according to researchers, high school can be too late to start planning -- financially and academically. To read the full article click on the link below.
We'll be in Helena on Wednesday, July 22!
Join the Montana Girls STEM Collaborative at Helena's Alive at 5 event, where we will be the featured non-profit organization, thanks to Anna Kazmierowski and A2Z Staffing. Alive at 5 is a weekly outdoor festival featuring music, food, crafts and more.

On Wednesday, July 22, Alive at 5 will be held in Helena's Performance Square on the Walking Mall from 5pm to 9pm. Look for our Montana Girls STEM Collaborative tables, where we'll be doing some fun hands-on STEM / STEAM activities (STEAM is Science-Technology-Engineering-Math + Art!).

You can also meet some of our board members and our new AmeriCorps VISTA member, plus learn about Montana Girls STEM Collaborative and sign up for great programs like Montana STEM Mentors and FabFems.

Learn more about Alive at 5, and we hope to see you Wednesday night!

Contact:
Suzi Taylor, Collaborative Co-Lead
PO Box 173860 Bozeman, MT 59717
406-994-7957