



March 2025 Newsletter

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Above: Flathead coaches were given the royal treatment during their first time coaching at Somers Middle School! Here they are enjoying lunch in the cafeteria with students in between sessions.

Coaching opportunities

We're in the thick of spring coaching!

Trained coaches, please sign up for sessions below:

RAVALLI

Hamilton High School

11th grade, AP Humanities, Argumentative Essay, Carmody

[Wednesday, March 12](#), single draft

12:20-1:40, 3 coaches needed

11th grade, College Prep, College Application Essay, Carmody

[Wednesday, April 23](#), single draft

2:00-3:30, 2 coaches needed

Corvallis High School

12th grade, Principles of American Democracy, American Legion Americanism Writing Contest, Huls

[Monday, March 10](#), single draft

8:30-10:05, 3 coaches needed

10:10-11:45, 3 coaches needed

12:25-1:55, 2 coaches needed

[Tuesday, March 11](#), single draft

8:30-10:05, 4 coaches needed

10:10-11:45, 6 coaches needed

10th grade, AP World History, AP Exam Practice Essay, Hudspeth

[Tuesday, March 18](#), single draft

8:30-10:00, 2 coaches needed

MISSOULA

Sentinel High School

12th grade, English, Schick

[Wednesday, March 5](#), second draft

10:10-11:40, 2 coaches needed

FLATHEAD

Evergreen Junior High

8th grade, ELA persuasive essays, Gronley

[Wed. March 5](#), first draft

8:35 - 9:42, 2 coaches needed

9:49 - 11:27, 2 coaches needed

[Wed. March 19](#), second draft

8:35 - 9:42, 4 coaches needed

9:49 - 11:27, 3 coaches needed

Kalispell Middle School

6th grade Informational Essay, Handford & Sanders

[Thurs. March 6](#), 5 paragraph essay

8:00 - 8:55, 4 coaches needed

9:00 - 9:50, 3 coaches needed

9:55 - 10:45, 2 coaches needed

11:25 - 12:15, 2 coaches needed

12:25 - 1:10, 6 coaches needed

Whitefish High School

9th grade, ELA short stories, Reed

[Monday, March 10](#), first draft

10:36 - 12:09, 1 coach needed

[Monday, March 17](#), second draft

10:36 - 12:09, 2 coaches needed

Muldown Elementary

4th grade, informative essays, 4th grade teacher team

[Wed. April 2](#), paragraph 1

12:30 - 1:30, 10 coaches needed

[Wed. April 9](#), paragraph 2

12:30 - 1:30, 10 coaches needed

[Wed. April 16](#), paragraph 3

12:30 - 1:30, 10 coaches needed

[Wed. April 23](#), paragraph 4

12:30 - 1:30, 11 coaches needed

[Wed. April 30](#), paragraph 5

12:30 - 1:30, 11 coaches needed

[Wed. May 7](#), paragraph 6

12:30 - 1:30, 12 coaches needed

Not a trained coach yet? For folks interested in Missoula and Ravalli, contact coordinator Kat Jackson (kat@writingcoachesofmontana.org). For individuals in Flathead, email coordinator Jeanne Wdowin (jeanne@writingcoachesofmontana.org).

WCM is hiring!

If you're passionate about K-12 literacy education and community-building, please consider applying for one of the positions!

Find detailed job descriptions and application instructions through the links below.

- [Executive Director](#): position will remain posted until filled
 - [Missoula/Ravalli Coordinator](#): accepting applications through Friday, March 7th
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Flathead volunteer scorers needed!

WCM is currently in the middle of a quantitative research project which will measure the impact of coaching on students' writing outcomes. With permission, the research team has collected and anonymized student work. Now we need a pool of volunteers to help us score the anonymized work.

Volunteer scorers will be trained by writing assessment expert, Dr. Beverly Chin, University of Montana Professor Emeritus of English and previous Director of English Teaching and Montana Writing Project.

After being trained, participants will read student essays and score each paper according to the holistic rubric provided. The scores will not affect actual student grades.

The volunteer scoring event will take place on **Saturday, March 8th from 8:30am-4pm at Columbia Falls High School**. Volunteers will need to be participate in the entire day's in-person event. Morning refreshments and lunch are

provided.

Educators can receive OPI renewal credits.

Thanks to Whitefish Community Foundation's grant program for funding this project! And a special thank you to Columbia Falls High Schools for partnering with WCM to implement this research. We hope that the data results in WCM's ability to make even more positive impact on students in the future.

If you are able to attend the event in Columbia Falls on Saturday, March 8th [please fill out this form.](#)

Science Curriculum Community Partnership

University of Montana Environmental Philosophy graduate student Lucille Vanek is excited to share a science curriculum opportunity with Montana teachers. Notably, this community thesis project has its roots in a fruitful connection established during Lucille's internship with WCM—an experience that began when she interviewed SpectrUM's Caitlin Ervin for the Writing Matters podcast. This collaboration underscores the power of shared vision and community engagement in advancing educational innovation. While Lucille's project is independent of WCM, we are delighted to encourage this burgeoning scholar's work and share this opportunity with Montana teachers:

Lucille's thesis project, From Fables to Facts: Discovering the World Through Stories and Science, is a dynamic program that integrates compelling narratives drawn from fables and diverse cultural traditions with hands-on science experiments. This unique approach is designed to spark early environmental curiosity, promote meaningful engagement, and encourage lifelong stewardship of the natural world.

By pairing storytelling with interactive scientific activities, the curriculum creates a rich, experiential learning environment that brings abstract environmental concepts to life. The program also leverages strong local partnerships with institutions such as SpectrUM Discovery Area, EmPower Place at the Foodbank, and Bitterroot Early Learning Network, enhancing its impact across the community.

For more information or to discuss partnership opportunities, please contact Lucille Vanek at (lucyvanek@icloud.com) or (636-432-3538).

Krispy Kreme fundraiser!

[Krispy Kreme](#) is supporting a fundraiser for WCM from **now through mid-April**.

[Buy your doughnuts by the dozen here!](#) Half of the proceeds will be donated to WCM.

Anyone in the U.S. can support this fundraiser by [purchasing the doughnuts online](#) and then choosing your local Krispy Kreme store to pick up your order.

Thank you in advance, from WCM and your sweet tooth!



Save the Date: Missoula & Bitterroot Gives!

WCM's biggest fundraisers in Missoula & Ravalli counties takes place on **May 1st & May 2nd** this year!

Please spread the word about this wonderful community giving event.

Save the Dates: end of year appreciation picnics!

It's almost that time of year again: let's celebrate our wonderful volunteer coaches, donors, and teacher partners at end of year picnics! Please save these evenings to gather with the WCM community.

Missoula & Ravalli: Tuesday, May 13th

Flathead: Thursday, May 15th

More details to come in the April newsletter.



Above: Flathead Coordinator Jeanne Wdowin (far left) enjoys coaches' company at an event at The Bookshelf in Kalispell, fall 2023.

Growth Mindset: A WCM blog

The Times, They Are A-Changin'

"There is nothing permanent except change."

Heraclitus (Greek philosopher, c. 535 BCE-c. 475 BCE)

"The first step toward change is awareness. The second step is acceptance"

Nathaniel Branden (psychotherapist and writer)

“Change brings opportunity.”

Nido Qubein (motivational speaker)

There are many quotes from famous people regarding change. Everyone’s life is filled with change and I believe mine has been charged with an extra amount that has added to my experience and contributed to my awareness. I began my teaching career in grade 4, and moved up through the grades to middle school level 8. My assignments included gifted students, 3-way remedial students, English Language Learners, life, physical and Earth sciences, and even 7th grade math, course 1. At the end of my career, I became a district wide assessment specialist which afforded me the opportunity to affect a larger student population. Every assignment was embraced with enthusiasm and the desire to do my very best work to increase student achievement.

I moved from New York State to Arizona, and finally to Montana. Each move presented its own challenges and rewards. I worked under numerous principals and superintendents who had their own style and agenda. Nevertheless, I was able to adapt, kept a positive attitude and maintained continuity of excellence. That is my mind set today as well, to ensure that routine tasks and responsibilities are not disrupted.

Why is this blog entry focused on change? Because Writing Coaches of Montana is experiencing a great change. Our executive director is entering a doctoral program in Michigan, and my counterpart coordinator in Missoula, is also moving on. (Stay tuned to April’s blog for more information). Of our small staff, I am the last one standing, so to speak. Our board is undergoing changes as well, with members terming off after a lengthy stint and new members eagerly taking their place. I anticipate that as much as things remain constant, there will be some changes.

What does this mean for us coaches? Keep calm and carry on. I will be remaining in the position of Flathead County Coordinator and I’m glad that I have so many dedicated volunteers to help me through the transition. We are the “boots on the ground”, we are the interface with students. We will continue to work with our teacher partners to complement their efforts and carry out our mission to assist all students to become confident, competent writers.

Change gives us an opportunity for personal growth. There will be new people and I anticipate new situations. The transition may force me to develop new skills but I will persist to do my best. I will continue to stay positive and keep things flowing along without a hitch in order to maintain continuity and smooth routines. I cannot predict what the new executive director will offer us, but I am confident that through the interview process the right candidate will be chosen and Writing Coaches of Montana will continue with our work to mentor students and support our teachers.

As always with gratitude,

--Jeanne Wdowin, Flathead Coordinator

Writing Coaches of Montana is proud to be endorsed by the

[Montana Association of Teachers of English Language Arts.](#)

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