



Located at: Helena College
1115 N. Roberts, Room 004
Helena, MT 59601
Phone: 406-447-6380
Fax: 406-447-6394
<http://accesstosuccess.helenaschools.org/>

High School Completion Program

Monthly Newsletter-May 2017

Access to Success is a high school completion program in the Helena School District. We provide students, 16 and over, who have dropped out the opportunity to earn their diploma.

Access to Success would like to say thank you to Dean Bingham for his years of support and wish him well on his new adventures “down under”! You will be missed.

Comments from an Access to Success Student:

I think one of the greatest things about Access is the lack of pretension. Where you're from or what you've been through has no bearing on what you can become through this experience. Charlie, Sam, Nate, Christa, Kahlee, Ingrid, Katie and Ms. Rowling see in us what traditional schools (and sometimes ourselves) couldn't: genuine potential and worth. We all have a place here and that's an especially comforting thought when you feel as



though you may have gotten lost somewhere along the way. I know I'm not alone in saying Access has seriously altered the course of my life in the most positive way possible. There are no words to describe how truly thankful I am to have found this program. ~Madison Riccardo

Class Spotlight: American Government

American Government class is awesome! Oh wait...I'm supposed to tell you a little about myself. I'm Charlie, I've been teaching social studies at Access to Success for eight years and absolutely love my job! I'm a Helena native, but spent about 20 years living out of state, most of that in Portland. I'm married, have two wiener dogs, four birds and am fully aware that we might have gone too far in the bird department. I'm a big fan of being out in nature camping, fishing, kayaking or just being in the woods. I have also reached expert status in binge watching t.v. series. Back to American Government. Seriously, you're going to love it. Together we will

explore how government is structured at the federal and state level, as well as the basic rights given to us as citizens in the Bill of Rights. Still boring? Not when we get to talk and debate about free speech, the right to bear arms, the death penalty, search warrants, privacy rights and more. After we understand the basic structure of government and our personal rights, we will take a critical look at things like money in elections, the debate over climate change, our foreign policy, and the role of the media in politics. We will stay current on what's going on in national politics and discuss how those events effect the individual, the nation, the world and the future. To help make the case for how awesome this class is, I asked a student for their thoughts. “Charlie guides us, but does not hold our hands to the end. We gain a basic understanding of how a government works, the different forms and purposes. At a certain point, Charlie lets us go and gives us room to form our own opinions and come to the realization that despite our political infancy, we have a voice. This is not government from a distance, it is relevant and in your face.” When you leave my class I want you armed with the critical thinking skills and confidence needed to work to save what you think is right and fight against what you think is wrong. “Democracy cannot succeed unless those who express their choice are prepared to choose wisely. The real safeguard of democracy, therefore, is education.” – President Franklin D. Roosevelt

Reminders:

- Graduation is at 11:00am on May 13th at the Lewis and Clark County Fairgrounds.
- Cap and Gowns are \$25 at the Helena College Bookstore
- Last day of class is May 12th!!!!
- Summer School starts Monday, May 15th! (calendar is on the back)
- Be safe, have a great summer and we will see you in August!