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Software teaches kids personal finance

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The business education classes in Colbert County's three high schools are the recipients of a new computer software program that is providing some much-needed information.

Steve Stayton, the district's career technical education coordinator, said the schools now have the Timemaps program in place for teaching personal finance.

Listerhill Credit Union provided a \$4,500 grant for the project.

Stayton said the gift couldn't have come at a better time because proration has crippled school budgets and because there is a need for students to have the information.

"It's important for our students to have personal finance information because they have no clue about things like interest rates and other factors that will affect them very personally," Stayton said. "A software development company in Birmingham, Timemaps/REMTECH Inc., wrote the program and it's really good and thorough."

Colbert County High School business teacher Julie Coan began using the program in her classroom last week.

She said it has given her students a good dose of reality.

"The students are enjoying it because they can get information like what jobs will be available with and without

high school diplomas and the cost of living in other states and salary ranges there," Coan said. "It's been a big hit and is raising the students' awareness of just what it costs to live.

"A student asked me the other day what people in various jobs make per year. These students only know \$7.25 per hour, so it's been eye opening."

Colbert Heights High School's business department used the program last year. Stayton said it has been such a success that he wanted the program for the other schools in the district.

Colbert Heights Principal Anthony Olivis said the program includes information based on actual business models used in the work force.

"The students are doing well with it and anything that helps bring in new information is a good thing," he said.

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