

[Insert Date]

Dear Parent/Guardian:

[Insert School] is preparing for the *Montana Aligned to Standards Through-Year (MAST) assessment* through the Montana Office of Public Instruction. Students in Grades 3-8 will take Math and English Language Arts (ELA) assessments in 3 administration windows as indicated in below chart:

	Window 1	**Window 2**	**Window 3**	
	October 19 – December 11 (8 weeks)	January 11 – March 5 (8 weeks)	March 29 – May 21 (8 weeks)	
Math	3-5 Testlets	3-5 Testlets	3-5 Testlets	1 Math Anchor Test
ELA	2 BOY Testlets	2 MOY Testlet 1 Performance Task Testlet	2 EOY Testlets	

**The actual number of math testlets your child(ren) takes each testing window will be contingent on your district's local curriculum sequence.*

What is the purpose of the MAST assessment?
The Montana OPI in partnership with New Meridian has developed an improved assessment system that will accurately reflect the needs of our students, teachers, and administrators while providing useful flexibility in terms of test administration. The MAST Assessment implements through-year assessments across the state that satisfy federal testing requirements and better aligns assessment with instruction.

The ultimate goal with the through-year model is to support teaching and learning needs. Rather than a single end-of- year assessment, the MAST assessment is broken up into smaller testlets over the course of the academic year. The through-year assessment design more closely aligns assessment with instruction while providing actionable data throughout the school year.

This through-year assessment provides critical information about student learning, but no single assessment should ever be the sole factor in making an educational decision. It is important to remember that assessments provide only one measure of student learning, but when combined with grades, classroom activities, unit quizzes and tests, and district-level assessments, the results of statewide assessments can help provide a complete picture of your child's abilities over the course of the school year and path toward academic success on Montana's content standards.

Details about the 2026-2027 administration:

- **Participants**: 3-8 Grades Math and ELA
- **Administrations**: 3 administration windows throughout the year
- **Total Estimated Testing Time:** 15-30 minutes per testlet
- **Technology**: Computer-based test delivery via secure site
- **Reports:**
  Student testlet and summative reports are available for educators and school leaders after administration. Individual student testlet reports will provide results from each testlet and [will be] made available to parents/guardians on [Insert TIME and Method].

  Individual through-year (summative) reports will provide the final determination of student achievement based on all testlets completed throughout the school year and [will be] made available to parents/guardians on [Insert TIME and Method]

Here are some things to note about the MAST test:

- Your child's privacy will be protected. State and federal laws, such as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), ensure these data remain confidential.
- Students with Individual Educational Plans (IEPs), Section 504 plans, or English Learner plans will be assessed based on individual student needs, consistent with all state and federal laws and regulations.

Here are some things you can do to help:

- Encourage your child to do their very best on everything they do in school, including the MAST assessment.
- Make sure he or she gets plenty of sleep the night before each test and has a healthy breakfast.
- Support your child by explaining the purpose of the tests and helping with homework and test reviews.

Learn More:

To learn more about this initiative navigate to the Montana OPI MAST webpage. New Meridian is a non-profit organization that creates high-quality, innovative assessment solutions that focus on the skills that matter most for success in school and in life. You can learn more about New Meridian here. Parent MAST resources can be found on the MAST Portal under *Parent & Family Resources*.

We appreciate your partnership in helping [Insert School] fulfill the state and federal requirements for statewide assessments and supporting your child to do his/her best.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions you may have about MAST. Questions can be directed to [School Contact] at [Contact Information].

Sincerely,

[Principal's Name]