

Student Handbook

OUR MISSION

Provide affordable, engaging, and relevant continuing education opportunities to adults in the community.

Billings Adult and Community Education is an extension of the Billings School District educational program and as such is under the authority of the school district board of trustees.

STAFF COMMITMENTS

Focus on student learning. We maintain that increasing student learning and positive outcomes is our fundamental purpose. We commit to providing an environment that is safe and supportive, a climate of respect and high expectations, and services that are engaging, relevant, and effective.

Cultivate a collaborative culture. We commit to working together as a staff and learning from one another as we serve students. We commit to working with partner organizations for mutual benefit and providing students access to the resources they need to be successful.

Focus on goals and results. We measure our effectiveness on the basis of results rather than intentions. We commit to continuous cycles of improvement by regularly assessing programs, policies, and practices on the basis of their impact on student learning.

STUDENT COMMITMENTS

Be Respectful

- Do not interfere with the rights, safety, or learning of others.
- Do not engage in any kind of harassment, intimidation, bullying, or violence.

Be Responsible

- Follow all district, program, and classroom expectations, including appropriate use of language, appropriate use of technology, and appropriate dress.
- Keep cell phones and all other electronic devices turned off or kept on silent/vibrate in classrooms **and put away in your pocket or bag**. In an emergency, you may use your cell phone in the breezeways or outside of the building. *At their discretion, teachers can allow students to use electronic devices in their classrooms for instructional purposes.*
- Keep the Lincoln Center free of litter.

Be Reliable

- Attend all classes and be on time.
- Come to class prepared to work for the entire class period.
- Actively participate in your education with clear goals.
- Face adversity with a solution-oriented approach.

Per Billings Public Schools – School Board Policy 2250-P1, you can be placed on a short-term pause-out or permanently dismissed from Billings Adult Education at any time for failing to uphold these commitments.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is critical to your success at Billings Adult Education. You are required to:

- Sign up for at least 3 days and 9 hours of class time per week. *(Counselors can adjust this requirement based on circumstances.)*
- Attend **at least 75%** of your classes.
- Contact your counselor via phone or email if you are going to be absent. *(Jesse 281-5011 / Autumn 281-5006)*
- Arrive to class on time and attend the entire class period.
- Check into the office if you are late for class or if you have to leave early.

The above requirements will be checked two (2) weeks from your start date and every two (2) weeks after that. At any time, if you are not meeting the requirements above:

- Your counselor will meet with you to problem solve.
- After problem solving with your counselor, if you are still not meeting the requirements, you can be put on a pause-out (you will not be allowed to attend classes for a minimum of 30 days). During or after the pause-out, you can contact your counselor to set up a meeting to discuss possible re-enrollment.
- Only three “starts” will be allowed per school year.

Per Billings Public Schools – School Board Policy 2250-P1, you can be placed on a short-term pause-out or permanently dismissed from Billings Adult Education at any time for poor attendance.

SCHOOL DISTRICT POLICIES

Billings Adult and Community Education will adhere to all federal, state, and local laws as well as school district policies and procedures.

While the program will follow all district policies, the below referenced policies important to know:

- Video Surveillance - Policy 3235
- Gun Free Schools - Policy 3250
- Possession of a Weapon on School Property - Policy 3250
- Gang Activity - Policy 3203 and 3203 P1

****Any possession / use of drugs, alcohol, marijuana, tobacco, or vapes in the building or on school district property may result in an immediate pause in the program. ****

PERFORMANCE

You are required to demonstrate continuous academic growth. You will take a TABE posttest in your Primary Area of Instruction (PAI) after a minimum of 40 hours of total instruction. You are required to make a gain *(of at least one NRS Level)* on the post-test as compared to your pre-test.

If you do not make a gain, your teachers and counselor will review your progress and goals, and make changes to your individual program as needed.

You will posttest a second time after 120 hours of total instruction. If you do not make a gain for a second time, your teachers and counselors will again review your progress and goals and decide if Billings Adult Education is the best placement for you. In order to continue in classes, a change in goal will be required. If it is decided that this is not the best placement, you will be exited and your counselor will attempt to refer you to other community agencies.

Per Billings Public Schools – School Board Policy 2250-P1, you can be placed on a short-term pause-out or permanently dismissed from Billings Adult Education at any time for lack of academic growth.

16 YEAR OLD REQUIREMENTS

- Must be enrolled for a minimum of three (3) days per week and nine (9) hours of instruction.
- Attend **at least 90%** of your classes.
- Must attend a minimum of 40 hours and achieve a gain on a posttest.
- Complete requirements of Career Planning/Workskills class or be employed.
- Must be prepared to pass three of the five HiSET subtests per teacher referral and be likely to pass the remaining two subtests in the current school year.
- All expectations in the Student Commitment section apply.
- Possess a valid Montana driver's license, Montana state issued ID, or Tribal ID.
- Restroom use occurs between class periods.

HiSET TESTING GUIDELINES

Scheduling of each subtest must be completed at least 24 hours in advance. Counselors or the registrar are available to assist with scheduling.

A student absence will count as one of the three attempts, with the exception of a valid reason such as a family death or hospitalization.

A student who needs to cancel a subtest must do so by contacting the counselor or registrar ***prior to the testing time***. Failure to contact the counselor or registrar will result in a loss of one testing attempt.

Subtests will either be canceled or rescheduled when you contact your counselor or registrar.

Students who are under the influence, with a noticeable odor (*clothes, coats, breath, backpacks, etc.*), or in possession of drugs, alcohol, marijuana, and/or vapes may be dismissed from the testing room and lose a testing attempt.

TESTING - STUDENT BEST PRACTICES

- Get a good night's rest
- Eat a balanced meal prior to testing time
- Arrive early
- Shower to refresh yourself prior to testing
- Dress appropriately--bring a jacket or extra shirt
- Review lessons and notes
- Think positively

FAQs

Why should I earn my HiSET certificate?

By earning your HiSET certificate, you have the opportunity to gain employment, gain advancement with your current employer, continue your education through a postsecondary institution, and/or meet military entrance requirements.

How long will this take me?

This depends on YOU and your commitment to your education.

How much does this cost?

Classes are free. The HiSET exam costs \$75.00.

Can this be done from home?

Maybe. You will need to discuss this with your counselor after attending in-person classes.

Is there an age requirement to enroll into Adult Education?

Yes, in the state of Montana, you must be at least 16 years old in order to enroll in Adult Education.

If I am 16 years old, do I have to take the Career Planning/Workskills class?

Yes, 16-year-old students must be enrolled in a Career Planning/Workskills class unless they are employed.

When does a program year start and end?

Billings Adult Education follows the Billings School District [calendar](#).

What do I need to bring for classes?

Students receive a green folder on the first day of classes from the counselor. Students should bring this folder to class daily.

When can I start testing?

Students can begin testing once they have demonstrated subtest preparedness with teacher recommendation.

What if I do not have a Montana state issued ID?

You must have a valid tribal ID, Montana state-issued ID, or driver's license in order to test. You must present your ID each time you take a subtest.

What if I forget my Montana state issued ID the day of testing?

You must present your valid ID each time you test. Failure to have your ID at the time of testing may result in a loss of an attempt and you will need to reschedule with your counselor or registrar.

Where do I go to take the HiSET subtests?

The testing room is located at the Lincoln Center on the first floor in room 112.

When can I take the HiSET subtests?

HiSET testing occurs on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Students must pre-register for HiSET testing with their counselor or registrar a minimum of 24 hours prior to the testing date.

Do I have to take all of the HiSET subtests at once?

No. You can take each test as you are ready.

If I have to take a break from classes, do I lose all of my progress?

No. Your classes are designed for you and you will pick up where you left off; however, you may need to review prior material.

How many attempts do I get per HiSET subtest?

You have three attempts in a calendar year from the date you paid for the subtest.

Do I have to pay for additional attempts to pass a HiSET subtest?

No. You get a total of three attempts to pass a subtest. Any additional attempts will require a \$15 payment and you have to wait for the calendar year to expire.

How long do I have to complete all five HiSET subtests?

Students have as long as they need to complete all five HiSET subtests, provided there is academic progress.

When I pay for a HiSET subtest, how long do I have to pass that subtest?

You have one calendar year beginning from the day the subtest is purchased.

Once I pass a HiSET subtest, does the score expire?

No, HiSET scores never expire.

What is the minimum score that I need to earn my HiSET?

A student must earn an 8 or higher on each of the subtests with a total score of 45 or higher on the five subtests combined.

Do my scores from Montana Youth Challenge (MYC) count towards HiSET completion?

Yes, any subtest passed at MYC will count toward HiSET completion at Billings Adult Education.

Once I earn my HiSET, what other educational opportunities are available through Billings Adult and Community Education?

Billings Adult and Community Education offers a variety of education opportunities, including certification programs and college preparation.

If I have a vehicle, can I park at Lincoln Center?

Yes, in designated parking spaces owned by the Billings School District. Space is limited and on a first come first serve basis. Parking in 10 minute spaces is prohibited.

Does Adult Education hold a graduation ceremony?

Yes. Each year Billings Adult Education holds a graduation ceremony that typically falls on the Wednesday prior to the high school graduation ceremonies. Friends and family are welcome to attend the ceremony.