



September 27, 2024

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Hellgate Elementary School District is participating in 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 4 administration windows as indicated in the below chart:

Test Sessions	Start Date	End Date	ELA	Math*
Test Session 1	October 14, 2024	November 22, 2024	2 Testlets	3-5 Testlets
Test Session 2	January 13, 2025	February 21, 2025	2 Testlets	3-5 Testlets
Test Session 3	March 24, 2025	May 2, 2025	2 Testlets	3-5 Testlets
Test Session 4	May 5, 2025	May 23, 2025	Anchor Testlet only 1 Testlet	

*The number of testlets your child will take depends on our district's curriculum plan for their grade level.

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 align assessment with instruction.

The ultimate goal of the "through year" model is to support the formative instructional process that is closer to the local decisions required 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 academic year. The "Through-Year Assessment" design benefits students, teachers, parents, and administrators by more closely aligning assessment with instruction while providing actionable data throughout the school year.

It is important to remember that statewide assessments provide only one measure of student learning. Still, when combined with grades, classroom activities, unit quizzes and tests, and district-level assessments, statewide assessments can complete the picture of a child's abilities and help him/her on a path toward academic success in reaching Montana's Content Standards.

Details about the 2024-2025 administration:

- **Participants:** 3-8 Grades Math and ELA
- **Administrations:** 4 administration windows throughout the year

- **Total Estimated Testing Time:** Under 15-30 minutes per testlet
- **Technology:** Computer-based test delivery via secure site
- **Reports:** Student response reports will be available to teachers and districts after administration. Individual student reports will provide results from each testlet via the Parent Portal and be sent home to parents/guardians at the end of the 24/25 school year. Access to the Parent Portal will be provided after the first test administration window.

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 best in everything they do in school, including the MAST assessment.
- Ensure your child 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.

To learn more about this initiative visit the following links:

- Montana OPI webpage [link](#)
- New Meridian: Assessment creator [link](#)
- Resources for Parents can be found on the Parent [MAST Portal link](#)

If you have any questions or concerns about the MAST, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Erin Ellis, Ed.D.

Hellgate Elementary School District #4

For more information:

Visit:

www.hellgate.k12.mt.us/departments/curriculum/assessment

MAST Assessment 2024-2025

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We appreciate your partnership in helping Hellgate Elementary School District fulfill the state and federal requirements for statewide assessments and supporting your child to do their best.