

CUSTER SCHOOL DISTRICT #15

FEBRUARY 2026 NEWSLETTER

www.custerschools.org

DISTRICT BASKETBALL TOURNAMENTS - GOOD LUCK REBELS!

Our basketball season is winding down and District tournaments are right around the corner. Tournaments will be held at Laurel 19-21 for both boys and girls.

Parent-Senior Night will be in Custer Friday, January 30 and in Hysham Saturday, Feb. 13.

Boys & Girls Southern Divisional C Tournaments will be held at Lewistown, Feb. 25-28

Boys & Girls State C Tournaments will be held in Missoula March 12-14.

DECEMBER STUDENTS OF THE MONTH

Our students of the month are Rylee Mothershead, Paycen Lackman and Ainsley Abel. Congratulations to our students of the month!

CUSTER SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES POSITIONS OPEN

Two (2) School Board Trustee positions are up for election. Both positions are three-year terms.

School board trustees play an important role in guiding the vision and governance of the district. Trustees work collaboratively to set policy, oversee the district budget, support student success, and represent the interests of the community.

Candidate filing opens Thursday, December 11, 2025, and closes Monday, February 9, 2026 (by 5:00 p.m.), for the regular school election to be held on Tuesday, May 5, 2026.

Individuals interested in running may contact Adriana Mayorga to obtain a Declaration of Intent and Oath of Candidacy form. Completed forms must be filed with the district clerk by the filing deadline.

Candidates must be registered voters within the school district.

For questions or additional information, please call (406) 856-4117, Ext. 3.

MUSIC NEWS

Pep Band: District BB February 19-21 in Laurel

Divisional BB Feb. 25-28 in Lewistown - TBD

Tri-County Band Day- March 18

District Festival Large Group- April 7

District Festival Solo/Ensemble- April 13

Tri-County Honor Band Mini-Tour- April 15

Honor Band Tour in Salt Lake City - April 22-26

State Music Festival-May 1

Spring Concert- May 12 @ 6:30 pm

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

If you have any changes or need to add anyone to the calendar for next year, please contact Ms. Heil at Custer School. The price of these calendars will be \$12.00 made out to Custer School. You may purchase a calendar at the office.

ACT TESTING IN CUSTER

ACT testing for our junior class is scheduled Tuesday, March 24 at 8:00 am.

SPELLING BEE

Our local school spelling bee was Monday, January 26 at 8:15 am in the new gym lobby. All students in grades 3-8 competed in the contest. Our school is allowed to send only one student to compete at the Yellowstone County Spelling Bee. The 2026 Yellowstone County Spelling Bee is set for Saturday, February 21, 2026, at 9:00 am, at Petro Theater on the MSU-B campus. An alternate will also be chosen from Custer School in case our winner can't make the competition. The school winner and alternate will be treated to lunch the day of the spelling bee. Congratulations to Ian Story for getting 1st place, Rilyn Burnside received 2nd place and our alternate is Julia Meredith. Great job to all of you!

PEG-A-WAY NEWS

Peg-A-Way 4-H Club will be set up at Valley Farmers Supply on February 14th from 8-11 selling flower bouquets and treats for Valentine's Day. Please stop by and support a great group of students and get those you love a special gift.



LUNCH BALANCES

If your child has a negative lunch balance, please pay as soon as possible. Thank you for your help with this.

SMITHSONIAN NEWS

The Smithsonian Group is selling raffle tickets for our trip this summer. We will be drawing the winners on January 30 at the basketball home game against Forsyth. The winner gets the choice of a Rebel quilt made by Lauren Sian, a \$300 Visa gift card or a \$200 Scheels gift card.

Prices are \$5 for 1 ticket or \$25 for 6 tickets. If you are interested in buying tickets and haven't been contacted, please reach out to Connie McQuire or Shawn Strecker.

We appreciate your generous donation!

NOTES FOR BUS DRIVERS

If a student rides a bus in the afternoon, that normally wouldn't ride, that driver needs a note from the parent/guardian saying that their child has permission to ride the bus.

Communication is greatly appreciated to our school bus drivers.

ELEMENTARY SWIM DAYS

Swimming starts back up again March 12 in Forsyth. The bus will leave at approximately 12:00 p.m. and return no later than 3:20 p.m.

Students are required to bring swimming suits and their own towels. If they have goggles, they may bring them.

Students may bring books, hand held video games, or other small items to use during the bus trip. This year's swim day will be: **MARCH 12 – MARCH 26 – APRIL 9 – APRIL 23** Should these dates change, we will notify you immediately. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your child's teacher.

WINTER CLOTHING

As we move into the colder winter temperatures, please make sure your children have appropriate cold weather clothing on each day. If your child/children ride the bus, they need to have coats, gloves, boots, etc. in case there is a problem with the bus. Thank you for your attention to this important matter of safety.

COUNSELOR NEWS

Montana Prevention Needs Assessment Student (MPNA) Survey

Our school is participating in a statewide needs assessment student survey. The Montana Prevention Needs Assessment Student Survey (MPNA), is funded by the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Service's Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities Division. The results will be used to help plan substance abuse prevention strategies and programs in our community. Some important facts about the survey:

1. It is anonymous. Students will not put their names on the survey.

No one will be able to connect any individual student with his or her responses. School staff will not see any student responses.

2. Participation in the survey is voluntary. Your son/daughter may decline to participate at any time or skip any question they do not wish to answer.

Questions cover alcohol, drugs, tobacco, and family and community factors related to substance use and abuse.

We feel that the survey is a worthwhile undertaking that will help create better, more effective prevention interventions using data driven decisions to reduce the prevalence of drug and alcohol use by youth in our community.

MAST Kite Parent Portal

Families can now access their child's MAST individual testlet score reports through the Kite Parent Portal.

Parent Portal Login: <https://parentportal-testlet.kiteaai.org/login>

Parents log in using the email address already on file with the school. If you have not received your login information or cannot access your account, please contact the counseling office so we can assist.

THEATER CLUB AUDITIONS



Theater Club is excited to announce auditions for our spring production, School Days: A Theatrical Sampler! Auditions will be held on Tuesday, February 4th at 4:30 p.m. in the old gym. All students 5th grade and up are encouraged to audition and participate. No previous theatrical experience is necessary. Students should bring a calendar with any scheduling conflicts to auditions. A rehearsal schedule will be provided after casting. Performance dates are April 23rd and 24th. We hope to see many new and returning faces join us this spring!

LITTLE CAESARS PIZZA KIT FUNDRAISER FOR THE CLASS OF 2027

The Class of 2027 would like to say thank you to everyone who supported our pizza kit fundraiser! Your generosity and support are greatly appreciated. Pizza kits will be delivered on February 2nd, and we look forward to getting them to you soon. Thank you for helping make our fundraiser a success!

LOST & FOUND ITEMS

Is your child missing clothing, shoes, coats, etc.? If so, you may want to come and look in the lost and found bin located by the office. These are items the janitorial staff has cleaned out of the locker rooms, classrooms, gym, & etc.

ATTENDANCE: A Key to Your Student's Success

Research shows that children who are absent from school do poorly in school. Even being late to school hurts a child's learning. While your child can copy notes or make up assignments, they can never get back the other learning that goes on: the discussions, the questions, the explanations by the teacher, and the thinking activities that make learning come alive. Your child's success in school depends on having a solid educational background - one that can only be gained through regular school attendance.

SUPERINTENDENT NEWS

It has been a great first semester. We have been pushing students to set high goals and push themselves toward personal success. Despite increased teaching standards, 68% of our high school students and 60% of our junior high students achieved a 3.3 or higher to make the honor roll. The success in our secondary is based on the success in the elementary programs where our students are increasingly reaching proficiency. Currently, 85% of K-4 students are at or above grade level in Math and 88% at or above grade level in Reading (AIMS WEB testing data).

School wide, our attendance rate is 95% which means that the average student is missing a little less than 3 days per semester. On top of this, our high school students are averaging 3.25 extracurriculars. The staff is very proud of the effort that our students have put into school and we hope to see a packed gym for State Wrestling (Metra) and District basketball (Laurel) Feb. 19-21.

Special thanks to Walt and Kathy Stieg for a large tax donation through the Innovative Educational Program Tax Credit program. This is a dollar for dollar tax credit that essentially allows taxpayers to donate Montana State Taxes to a school in lieu of paying taxes to the state. Also a big thank you to the 4-H, Abel and Stieg families for their beef donations to the school food program through Beef-to-School. Staff and students really appreciate the quality of our local beef at school lunch!