

CUSTER SCHOOL DISTRICT #15

OCTOBER 2026 NEWSLETTER

www.custerschools.org



PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-Teacher Conferences will be held from 4:00 to 7:00 pm on Monday, October 26. Elementary parents will receive a scheduled time to meet with their child's teacher. Junior high and high school parents may come in at any time from 4:00 to 7:00 pm. Parents that cannot meet with our teachers on this day can call the school office for a scheduled appointment with your child's teacher or teachers.

TEACHERS' CONVENTION

There will be no school on Thursday, October 15 and Friday, October 16 so that our teachers can attend professional development workshops in various communities throughout our state. The last day of the first quarter will be Wednesday, October 14.

Ms. Teagen Ruff

Teagen Ruff, a Custer junior, was selected as the 2026 National Rural Education Association (NREA) Writing Contest High School Runner-Up! Teagen created a video last spring highlighting our Custer Senior Citizens' Center. She interviewed several local seniors as well as Gail Knerr for a video that not only shed light on the challenges seniors face in rural areas but also highlighted the sense of community that keeps small towns alive and well for people of all ages. She will receive an award of \$200!

Press release from NREA: Teagen's video stood out among submissions from young people across rural America, and we are proud to recognize the creativity, storytelling, and perspective she brought to this year's theme, "Ready, Set, Rural: Creating Opportunities Everywhere." Creating a story and putting it out into the world takes more than technical skill. It takes something to say, a willingness to be seen and heard, and the courage to invite other people into your perspective. Teagen's work did exactly that, and we are grateful that she shared it with us.

Red Ribbon Week will be Monday, October 26 thru Thursday, October 29



This year's theme is To Be A Hero And Stay Drug Free.

Dress up days will be determined at a later date.

When dressing up for these days, all school dress code guidelines must be followed.

HALLOWEEN PARTY

This year's Halloween party will be ^{Wed.} ~~Thursday~~, October ²⁸ ~~29~~, because we will have no school the day of Halloween. The party will begin at 2:00 to 2:15 for preschool and kindergarten students. The other grades will join us in intervals of 10-15 minutes. So, mark your calendars and join us for the Halloween fun!



ADDRESS CHANGES or NAME CHANGES

If any family has an address or name change, please contact Shari in the office to get it changed. If you would like to receive the newsletter, please call Shari or Ana at the school to give us your e-mail address.

LUNCH BILLS

In an effort to keep our daily lunch program viable, we have determined that we need to take steps to collect lunch bills that are overdue. Essentially, if we don't get paid for food that we serve in a timely manner, we won't have funds available to pay for food in the future. Our lunch bill policy is as follows: When a family's lunch bill exceeds more than \$50.00 per student, we will notify you that your bill is overdue and that the bill must be paid within 30 days, or you must have established a plan to pay with the superintendent. Failure to pay, may result in your bill being turned into the collections service. Lunch bills will need to be paid **separately** from all of the other accounts. All checks can be made to the Custer School



EXTRA-CURRICULAR BUS PROCEDURES

In order for a parent to get his/her child off the extracurricular bus, the parent must, in writing, tell the coach/advisor that he/she is taking the child off the bus and assuming responsibility for the child. School personnel do not have the authority to allow a child to go home with another adult, even with a written note from the child's parent. If you are not going to be attending the extracurricular activity and plan to have your child ride home with another adult, please notify our superintendent **prior** to the bus departure time from our school. In order for a parent to get his/her child off the extra-curricular bus, the parent must, in writing, tell the coach/advisor that he/she is taking them.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR AT EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

It is the parent's responsibility to monitor your children at extra-curricular activities. Children should not be running along the sidelines in the gym or at the football field while athletic contests are in session. We would appreciate children not being unsupervised in the lunch room, hallways and classrooms during activities.

PARENTS, PLEASE HAVE YOUR CHILDREN SITTING WITH YOU AT THE EXTRA-CURRICULAR EVENTS. If we continue to have children running around unsupervised during activities, we will ask them to leave.

YEARBOOKS

We have a limited number of the 2025-2026 yearbooks left. If you are interested, please contact Ms. Heil. Yearbooks sell for \$30.00 each.

SENIOR CLASS ITALIAN SODAS

The Senior Class is selling Italian Sodas again this year! Sodas will be delivered on every other Wednesday.

First Semester Dates:

Sept. 2, 16, 30 • Oct. 14, 28 • Nov. 11 • Dec. 2, 16

Orders & money are due by 3:30 p.m. Tuesday before each soda day. First-period teachers will collect orders and payment.

Prices:

- Without cream/whipped cream: \$4.50
- With cream: \$5.00

Punch Cards: Available in the office for 11 drinks!

- No cream: \$45/With cream: \$50

Thank you for supporting the Senior Class!

BOX TOPS FOR EDUCATION

Earn Cash for our School! No more clipping! All you need is your smartphone. The new and improved Box Tops mobile app uses state of the art technology to scan your store receipt, find participation products add instantly and Box Tops to our school's earnings online. This money is put into the Elementary Fund and is used for field trips and our annual Field Day. Please download your Box Tops app today and help us earn money for our school!

JH BASKETBALL

Practice for junior high girls and boys basketball will start Monday, October 12, for grades 5-8. Athletes need to have a physical form, training rules and a concussion form turned into the office before the first practice. They will not be able to practice until these forms are turned in. Also, student athletes need to purchase an activity ticket from the office before their first game. The basketball schedule will be on our website soon.

COUNSELOR NEWS

MAST Assessment

Students in Grades 3–8 will participate in the Montana Aligned to Standards Through-Year (MAST) assessment in Math and English Language Arts (ELA) during the 2026–2027 school year.

MAST is Montana's statewide assessment system designed to provide information about student learning throughout the school year. Instead of one large end-of-year test, students complete shorter testlets throughout the year, allowing teachers and schools to use assessment information to better support instruction and student learning.



17 Testing Windows

Window 1	Window 2	Window 3
Dates Oct. 19–Dec. 11	Jan. 11–Mar. 5	Mar. 29–May 21
Math 3–5 testlets	3–5 testlets	3–5 testlets + Anchor Test
ELA 2 BOY testlets	2 MOY + Performance Task 2 EOY testlets	

Each testlet is expected to take approximately 15–30 minutes and will be completed on a computer.

What Families Should Know

MAST results are one measure of student learning and are considered alongside classroom work, grades, quizzes, district assessments, and other information. Students with IEPs, 504 Plans, or English Learner plans will receive appropriate accommodations based on their individual needs.

Families can help by:

- Encouraging students to do their best.
- Making sure students get plenty of sleep and eat a healthy breakfast.
- Helping students understand that the assessment is an opportunity to show what they know.

For additional information and parent resources, visit the Montana Office of Public Instruction MAST webpage at opi.mt.gov/MAST or the MAST Portal through New Meridian.

ASVAB Testing for Juniors

Custer High School juniors will take the ASVAB (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery) on October 21.

The ASVAB is a career exploration and aptitude assessment that can help students learn more about their strengths, skills, and potential career areas. Students can use their results as one resource when considering future education, training, and career options.

Juniors should come prepared, get a good night's sleep, and do their best!

RHBI Mental Wellness Screening

On November 3, students in Grades 6–12 will have the opportunity to participate in a mental wellness screening through the Rural Behavioral Health Institute (RBHI). The screening is designed to help identify students who may benefit from additional support and is a proactive part of promoting student well-being.

The screening takes approximately 5–15 minutes and is completed confidentially using a secure platform. Students will be reminded that participation is voluntary and that they may stop at any time.

An opt-out form will be included with report cards. Parents/guardians who do not want their student to participate should complete and return the opt-out form to the school.

For more information about the screening, families can visit rbhi.org.

College Representatives Coming to Custer

Custer High School students will have the opportunity to meet with college representatives during lunch this fall! Representatives will share information about their schools, programs, admissions, scholarships, and what college life is like.

Upcoming College Visits:

- Montana State University — October 5
- Northwestern College — October 13
- University of Montana — October 21

Students interested in learning more about these colleges are encouraged to stop by during lunch and take advantage of this opportunity to ask questions and explore their options after high school. More will be scheduled throughout the year. If there is a particular school your student would like to speak with, please contact Mrs. Torralba.

College & Career Fair in Hardin

Custer High School juniors and seniors will have the opportunity to attend a College & Career Fair in Hardin on October 19. More than 22 colleges and universities will have representatives available in the Hardin High School Commons from 10:30 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

Representatives will include colleges from across the East Coast, Southwest, and other regions, giving students a chance to explore a variety of college programs and opportunities, ask questions, and learn about life after high school.

Permission forms will be sent home closer to the event. Juniors and seniors are encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity to explore their post-secondary options!