HELLGATE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 4
2385 FLYNN LANE
MISSOULA, MONTANA 59808
(406)728-5626 FAX (406)728-5636

November 5, 2026

Dear Parents/Guardians of Students in Grades 3-8,

As part of our Montana Aligned to Standards Through-Year (MAST) assessment, given by the Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI), students in grades 3-8 will complete a survey in the second testing window. The **MAST survey** is brief (approximately 5-10 questions) and allows the OPI to gather valuable feedback regarding the student testing experience. Survey questions will focus on their experience with the assessment and will help shape future iterations of the MAST, improving statewide assessment in evaluating student learning.

More information about the MAST Assessment is available on the MAST Portal and the OPI MAST webpage.

If, for any reason, you do not consent to your child's participation in the MAST survey, please sign this form below and return it to school or send me the following information in an email by **December 19, 2026**:

Student Name
Grade
Teacher Name
Parent Name

We appreciate your partnership in helping Hellgate Elementary School District participate in this important pilot and supporting your child to do his/her best.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions.

Sincerely,

Erin N. Ellis, Ed.D.
Director of Curriculum and Assessment
eellis@hellgatesd4.k12.mt.us
406-532-1076

STUDENT SURVEYS OPT-OUT FORM

As the parent or guardian, you can have your child excused from the MAST survey. We will provide your child with an alternative activity should you choose to have them not participate in the survey.

If you have questions, please contact:

- ➢ Donna Smith, Administrative Assistant to the Director of Curriculum and Assessment, at 406-532-1076 or dsmith@hellgatesd4.k12.mt.us
- ➢ Erin Ellis, Director of Curriculum and Assessment, at eellis@hellgatesd4.k12.mt.us

Parents and guardians only complete this form if they do NOT want their child to participate in these surveys. Please return the opt-out form to your child's school by December 19, 2026.

Date:	
Student Name:	Grade:
Teacher:	
My child may NOT participate in the following survey: ☐ MAST Survey	
Parent/Guardian Name:	
Signature of Parent/Guardian:	

Disclaimer: This letter is not to opt-out of state testing. All students, including students with disabilities and English Learners, are required by state and federal law to take part in the state assessments with or without accommodations. Generally, if a student can receive instruction, then they are also able to participate in state assessments. Students may only be exempted from testing under certain, limited conditions. In these rare and unique instances, a student may be unable to participate in any part of the assessment due to a significant and documented medical reason. In these cases, the school is not penalized for that student's absence due to the documented significant medical emergency. Non-participation for any other reason will negatively impact the participation rate calculation (MT OPI "MontCAS Policies and Procedures for Participation in State Assessments," p. 9).