

Thursday, August 29th, 2024

DeSmet Public School



6355 Padre Ln. Missoula, MT 59808

<http://desmetschool.org> T: (406) 549-4994

Welcome Back DeSmet Families!

We are delighted to have you back! To our new families, we extend a warm welcome to our school and look forward to getting to know you.

If anyone is in need of a new backpack, we have some available. Please inform Mrs. Vicki in the school office or any teacher, and we will ensure you receive one. This offer also includes any supplies that a student may need.

We have sent home handbooks along with a signature packet. Please return the signature packet as soon as possible. The handbook is yours to keep.

Picture Day is scheduled for September 17th. We will send out the picture packets next Thursday.

If you are a family from out of the district, please visit the office to complete an out-of-state agreement form. This form must be filled out at the beginning of each new school year.

Please note that there will be no school on Monday. Happy Labor Day!

Attention Students and Parents:

Girls' volleyball for grades 6-8 will begin on Tuesday, September 3. It is important for all participants to complete their physicals as soon as possible.

Additionally, boys' basketball for grades 6-8 will be the next upcoming sport. If your student is interested in playing, please ensure that their sports physicals are completed prior to the first practice, if possible.

Upcoming Events:

- **September 2nd: No School**
- **September 17th: Picture Day**
- **September 26th: Early release at 12:30 PM**
- **September 27th: No School**



DeSmet Public School District #20, 6355 Padre Lane, Missoula, Montana 59808 • (406) 549-4994

August 28, 2024

Dear Parent/Guardian:

DeSmet School is preparing for 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 below chart:

Administration	Start Date	End Date	ELA	Math*
Admin 1	October 14, 2024	November 22, 2024	2 Testlets	3-5 Testlets
Admin 2	January 13, 2025	February 21, 2025	2 Testlets 1 Performance Task	3-5 Testlets
Admin 3	March 24, 2025	May 2, 2025	2 Testlets	3-5 Testlets
Admin 4	May 5, 2025	May 23, 2025	1 Testlet	

**The actual number of testlets your child(ren) takes each testing window will be contingent on your district's local curriculum sequence.*

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 aligns assessment with instruction.

The ultimate goal with 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 course of 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, but 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 down 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:** 15-30 minutes per testlet

- **Technology:** Computer-based test delivery via secure site
- **Reports:** Student reports will be available for teachers and districts after administration. Individual student reports will provide results from each testlet.

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 very best on everything they do in school, including the MAST assessment.
- Make sure he or she 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.

Learn More:

To learn more about this initiative go to the Montana OPI MAST webpage. New Meridian is a non-profit organization that creates high-quality, innovative assessment solutions that focus on the skills that matter most for success in school and in life. Parent MAST resources can be found at <https://newmeridiancorp.org/montana-aligned-to-standards-through-year-program-portal/> under *Resources for Parents*.

We appreciate your partnership in helping DeSmet School fulfill the state and federal requirements for statewide assessments and supporting your child to do his/her best.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions you may have about MAST. Questions can be directed to Kris Gardner at (406) 549-4994.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matt Driessen", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Matt Driessen
Superintendent, DeSmet School