



# Beaverhead County High School

104 North Pacific Street  
Dillon, MT 59725  
(406) 683-2361  
Fax 683-5263



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Dear Parent/Guardian:

Beaverhead County High School is preparing for the annual administration of the ACT assessment, administered each year to Montana juniors. As listed on our school calendar, juniors will take the assessment on **March 24<sup>th</sup>**. State and federal law requires all students to participate for high school academic achievement reporting. Participation in this test is important. State assessments are based on the progression of skills and knowledge that are needed at particular grades to ensure students graduate college and career ready. Teachers use these state assessments as one of many tools to understand individual student achievement (how much a child knows at the end of the year) and individual progress (how much a child has improved over the previous year). Teachers also use these results to identify student academic strengths and weaknesses and adjust instruction accordingly.

Our school uses state assessments to determine if we have reached the state educational goals, to identify areas for improvement, and to address any equity issues. Once we identify areas for improvement, we use the data to set goals in our annual Comprehensive School Improvement Plan addressing student achievement needs.

High school juniors taking the ACT may be interested in options after high school. The Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI) and Office of the Commission of Higher Education (OCHE) have partnered to offer the ACT at no cost. To support students with postsecondary opportunities, the OPI and OCHE have compiled 23 “critical questions” about students’ educational background, experiences, and non-academic activities to support them with these interests. All 23 questions are voluntary and are not required to receive a score report. The data are released to the OPI, OCHE, and universities and scholarship programs through the ACT Enroll System to help students with their postsecondary pursuits. The Montana University System may contact students via email and other means of communication to inform them about scholarships and other Montana opportunities. If students or parents do not want to share this information, students may choose not to complete the 23 critical questions with **no impact** on their test scores or grades.

Results from state assessments provide the state, our district, our school, teachers, you, and your child with information about the knowledge gained over the past school year. Individual student reports give results from the test and will be sent home to parents as soon as they are released from ACT in late Spring 2020.

It is important to remember that state assessments provide only one measure of student learning, but when combined with grades, classroom activities, unit quizzes and tests, and district-level assessments, the end-of-year tests 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.

You can explore our school’s state assessment results by going to the Office of Public Instruction’s [Student Achievement Dashboard](https://bit.ly/2M9VWve) (link: [bit.ly/2M9VWve](https://bit.ly/2M9VWve)) or visit [Montana’s Every Student Succeeds Act \(ESSA\) Report Card Information for Families website](https://bit.ly/31PEanM) (link: [bit.ly/31PEanM](https://bit.ly/31PEanM)) to see how our school compares to other schools across Montana in a variety of different measures.

**Here are some things to note about the state assessments:**

- Your child’s grades will not be impacted by their scores on the state tests.

- 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 this end-of-year state test.
- 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.

We appreciate your partnership in helping BCHS fulfill the state requirement for end-of-year assessments and supporting your child to do his/her best.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions you may have about state testing this year. Questions can be directed to Carol Perisho at [cperisho@bchsmt.com](mailto:cperisho@bchsmt.com).

Sincerely,  
Gary Haverfield  
BCHS Principal-Superintendent  
[ghaverfield@bchsmt.com](mailto:ghaverfield@bchsmt.com)  
406-683-2361