

District: «District_name»

School: «School_Name»

Dear «Principal_Title» «Principal_Fname» «Principal_Lname»,

Thank you for all that you do to support education in Montana. In July, I notified your district of its selection to participate in the 2026 administration of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), also known as *The Nation's Report Card*. NAEP is the largest nationally representative and continuing assessment of what students in the United States know and can do in various subjects and is administered by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) within the U.S. Department of Education. Participation is required under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) reauthorization of 2015 for any district receiving Title I funding.

I am writing to provide you with additional information. «School_Name» has been selected to represent schools across the nation. NAEP will administer a digitally-based assessment in mathematics and reading at grades 4, 8 and 12 and civics and U.S. history at grade 8 from **January 26 – March 20, 2026**. Each student will be assessed in one subject only. Selected schools are notified in advance so you can include the NAEP assessment window on their school calendars and incorporate NAEP into the planned school program.

As conducted in previous years, NAEP representatives provide significant support to schools by administering the assessment. We've collaborated with your district's technology staff, «Technology_Coordinator_Fname» «Technology_Coordinator_Lname» to determine which mode of administration works best for your school. Your school has been assigned to **NAEP devices and Internet**. Please provide dedicated space for most, if not all, of the day with tables or flat desks and an adequate number of electrical outlets in the assessment location.

To prepare for the assessment, NAEP would like to begin preparations with a designated [school coordinator](#) who will serve as the single point of contact for all matters pertaining to the NAEP assessment.

«School_Name» will play an important role by participating; your support of the assessment will help ensure this is a positive experience for your students.

School's Assessment Date:	To be determined in early November.
Subjects:	Mathematics and Reading. Each student will be assessed in one subject only.
Sampled Grade:	«Grade_or_Age»
Assessment Sessions:	Up to two sequential sessions of about 25 students each.
Assessment Duration:	About 120 minutes (including transition time and instructions.)
Assessment Administrators:	NAEP Representatives

Principal Attention Needed

1. **Review** the [State Superintendent's NAEP 2026 Memorandum](#).
2. **Include** the NAEP assessment window on your school calendar.
3. **Complete** the [NAEP 2026 Designate School Coordinator](#) form by **Friday, October 3, 2025**.

I look forward to collaborating with you and your staff to ensure the successful administration of NAEP 2026. Your support is vital in our efforts to measure what Montana students know and can do. For additional information, please see [Selecting Schools for Participation in State-Level NAEP](#), and visit the OPI's NAEP website at

<https://opi.mt.gov/Leadership/Assessment-Accountability/MontCAS/NAEP>. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



Shantel Niederstadt, NAEP State Coordinator

Department of Teaching and Learning

Montana Office of Public Instruction

- Phone: 406.444.3450
- Email: sniederstadt@mt.gov
- Website: <http://opi.mt.gov/>

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) conducts the National Assessment of Educational Progress to evaluate federally supported education programs. All of the information you provide may only be used for the purposes of research, statistics, and evaluation under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA; 20 U.S.C. § 9543) and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law. Every NCES employee as well as every NCES agent, such as contractors and NAEP coordinators, has taken an oath and is subject to a jail term of up to 5 years, a fine of \$250,000, or both if he or she willfully discloses ANY identifiable information about you in any unauthorized manner. Electronic submission of your information will be monitored for viruses, malware, and other threats by Federal employees and contractors in accordance with the Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2015.