Dear Parents/Guardians,

We hope this message finds you well. We are delighted to inform you about your school's participation in the Montana Alternative Student Testing (MAST) Pilot Program administered by the Montana Office of Public Instruction. This initiative aims to revolutionize our assessment system and better address the needs of our students, teachers, and administrators.

Your child, along with over 20,000 Montana students in grades 3-8, has completed assessments in testing windows up to this point of the year in Mathematics and English Language Arts (ELA). In total, there are five administration windows, each with its own specific focus and testlets, as outlined below:

Administration	Start Date	End Date	ELA	Math*
Admin 1	October 23, 2023	November 10, 2023	2 Testlets	1-3 Testlets
Admin 2	November 27, 2023	December 15, 2023	N/A	1-3 Testlets
Admin 3	January 29, 2024	February 16, 2024	2 Testlets	1-5 Testlets
Admin 4	March 11, 2024	April 5, 2024	Performance Task	1-5 Testlets
Admin 5	April 15, 2024	May 10, 2024	2 Testlets	1-6 Testlets

*The number of testlets varies based on your district's local curriculum sequence.

The primary purpose of the MAST pilot is to introduce "through-year" assessments, replacing traditional end-of-year state summative assessments. This innovative model aims to provide more flexibility in test administration, yielding actionable data throughout the academic year to support the formative instructional process.

We want to emphasize several key points regarding the MAST test:

- Your child's grades will not be influenced by their testlet scores.
- Student data privacy is rigorously protected by state and federal laws, ensuring confidentiality.
- Students with IEPs, Section 504 plans, or English Learner plans are assessed based on their individual needs, in compliance with state and federal regulations.
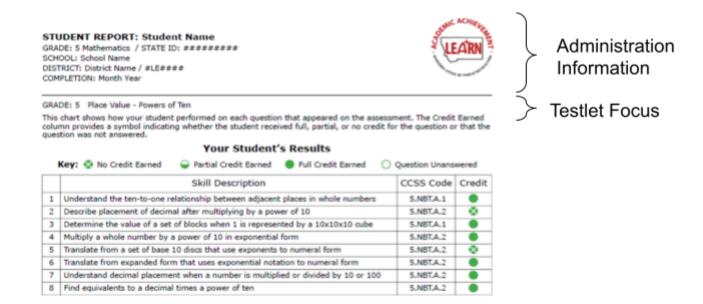
Your child's score reports, detailing their performance on each question included in the taken testlets, are enclosed with this communication. Here are some actions you should consider doing with the pilot score reports:

- **Consider Results as One Data Point**: Treat the pilot assessment results as just one data point in a broader context of student assessment and learning, acknowledging that multiple sources of data should be used for a comprehensive understanding of student proficiency.

- **Gather and Utilize Feedback**: Talk to your child about the assessment and use the results, to think about potential learning gaps and areas needing support.

- **Communicate and Collaborate**: Share insights with the child's teacher for collaborative problem-solving.

While these score reports can provide insight to how your child performed on items aligned to topics taught in class, each question is still in the field-testing phase and will undergo further analysis to ensure validity and reliability. You should be cautious in your interpretation. Here are some guidelines you should consider when reading the reports:

- **Do Not Treat Results as Definitive:** Pilot assessments are often exploratory and may not fully capture student abilities or learning outcomes. It's important not to treat these results as definitive or conclusive about your child's performance.

- **•Do Not Ignore Contextual Factors:** Be wary of overlooking the specific conditions under which the pilot assessment was conducted. Factors like test environment, student stress levels, or technical issues can significantly impact results and should be taken into account.

- **•Do Not Neglect Limitations:** It's crucial to understand the limitations and exploratory nature of these assessments. Misinterpretation of these results can lead to unrealistic expectations or misguided educational decisions.

- **•Do Not Base High-Stakes Decisions on These Results:** Avoid using pilot assessment results to make high-stakes decisions

- **•Do Not Overlook the Need for Feedback and Revision:** Pilot assessments should be a learning experience for both students and parents. Not providing feedback about the assessment process and content from students is a missed opportunity for improvement.

Pilot Score Report Guide

STUDENT REPORT: Student Name
GRADE: 5 Mathematics / STATE ID: #########
SCHOOL: School Name
DISTRICT: District Name / #LE####
COMPLETION: Month Year

Administration Information

Testlet Focus

GRADE: 5   Place Value - Powers of Ten

This chart shows how your student performed on each question that appeared on the assessment. The Credit Earned column provides a symbol indicating whether the student received full, partial, or no credit for the question or that the question was not answered.

Your Student's Results

Key: ⊗ No Credit Earned   ◒ Partial Credit Earned   ● Full Credit Earned   ○ Question Unanswered

	Skill Description	CCSS Code	Credit
1	Understand the ten-to-one relationship between adjacent places in whole numbers	5.NBT.A.1	●
2	Describe placement of decimal after multiplying by a power of 10	5.NBT.A.2	⊗
3	Determine the value of a set of blocks when 1 is represented by a 10x10x10 cube	5.NBT.A.1	●
4	Multiply a whole number by a power of 10 in exponential form	5.NBT.A.2	●
5	Translate from a set of base 10 discs that use exponents to numeral form	5.NBT.A.2	⊗
6	Translate from expanded form that uses exponential notation to numeral form	5.NBT.A.2	●
7	Understand decimal placement when a number is multiplied or divided by 10 or 100	5.NBT.A.2	●
8	Find equivalents to a decimal times a power of ten	5.NBT.A.2	●

Understanding the Score Report:
- **Skill Description:** Description of the skill each item assessed.
- **CCSS Code:** Specific Common Core State Standard code the question aligned with.
- **Credit:** Amount of credit earned for each item, categorized as No Credit Earned, Partial Credit Earned, Full Credit Earned, or Question Unanswered.

Should you have any queries or require further clarification regarding the assessment or the score report, please feel free to contact your child(ren)'s school or visit the OPI's MAST webpage. Your understanding and engagement are highly valued and appreciated.