



The Helena Public Schools educate, engage, and empower each student to maximize his or her individual potential with the knowledge, skills and character essential to being a responsible citizen and life-long learner.

Board of Trustees – Teaching and Learning Committee

Online Meeting

Wednesday, May 6, 2020 – 12:00p.m.

Notice of Online Meeting:

In compliance with the guidance of local and state Health Officials, the Helena Public Schools are conducting this Board of Trustees Teaching & Learning Committee Meeting as an online meeting. This meeting will not occur at any specific location as all members will attend online.

Members of the public are able to attend by clicking on the below link. We ask that all participants mute their microphone until called upon by the Committee Chair for general and/or specific public comments. Upon completing public comment, please ensure that your microphone is again muted.

This meeting will take place using Microsoft Teams. However, participants need only to click on the below link to join the meeting from any internet enabled device.

https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_MzEwNmYwMGMtMGFmNy00ZWFKLTk4MjgtZjBjOGE1NDU3ZmM4%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%22f4b4f9cd-c417-4e65-8143-10d0fe789053%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%229e76a419-5be2-4a93-aac0-5516e94c521c%22%7d

Committee Purpose Statement: The Teaching and Learning Committee collectively works to operationalize the strategic priorities of the Helena Public Schools specifically in areas related to our goals and measures for teaching and learning.

AGENDA

- I. CALL TO ORDER / INTRODUCTIONS
- II. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT: *This is the time for comment on public matters that are not on the agenda. Public matters do not include any pending legal matters, private personnel issues or private student issues. Please do not attempt to address such issues at this time or you will be ruled out of order. The Board cannot enter into a discussion during General Public Comment.*
- III. REVIEW OF AGENDA
- IV. REVIEW OF MINUTES
03/04/20 Teaching and Learning Committee Meeting Minutes (see attached)

V. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/DISCUSSION

A. Update on Remote Learning

- Grading Update (*T. Ream and J. Davidson*)
- Framework Development (*J. McKay, J. Davidson and G. Myers*)
- Update on Spring/Summer Considerations for Small Groups (*T. Ream*)

B. Spring Survey Discussion (*T. Ream*)

Discussion pertaining to survey plans during our ongoing closure

VI. BOARD COMMENTS

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Next Meeting:
June 3, 2020 | Meeting Venue/Format TBD

Helena Public Schools Board of Trustees

Sarah Sullivan
Board Chair

Terry Beaver
Vice Chair

Tyler Emmert
Trustee

Luke Muszkiewicz
Trustee

Jeff Hindoien
Trustee

Libby Goldes
Trustee

Sanjay Talwani
Trustee

Jennifer Walsh
Trustee



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Board of Trustees – Teaching and Learning Committee Meeting

May Butler Center | 55 S. Rodney Ave

Wednesday, March 4, 2020 – 12:00pm

MINUTES - DRAFT

ATTENDANCE

Committee: *Others:*

Sarah Sullivan, Committee Chair	Terry Beaver, Trustee
Libby Goldes, Committee Member	Tyler Ream, Superintendent
Siobhan Hathhorn, Committee Member	Josh McKay, Assistant Superintendent
	Barb Ridgway, Chief of Staff
	Gary Myers, Education Technology Coordinator
	Jane Shawn, HEA President

I. CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting was called to order at 12:01pm by Committee Chair, Sarah Sullivan.

II. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

No comments were offered.

III. REVIEW OF AGENDA

No changes were requested.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

No changes were requested.

V. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/DISCUSSION

A. Assessment Platform

Dr. Ream provided an overview of the previous board meeting's assessment platform presentation. Ms. Goldes recommended including assessment information in handbooks and on the website. Ms. Ridgway said the information was included in handbooks, and it would be added to the website. Dr. Ream added the assessments would be reassessed annually and modified as needed.

B. Spring Survey Update

Dr. Ream provided the following updates to the committee:

- The student survey had been finalized.
- The staff survey was being edited.
- The community survey would be finalized after the staff survey.

Dr. Ream listed a May 2020, estimate for distribution of the first survey and provided an overview of the goals for the surveys as follows:

- Fewer than 25 questions,
- A duration of no longer than 15 minutes
- Determining the most effective questions in conjunction with Panorama Education
- Developing questions that will lead to the actionable results

Dr. Ream provided a draft of the first survey to the committee. Mr. Myers added the vocabulary on surveys varied by grade level.

Ms. Sullivan asked how the surveys were conducted. Dr. Ream answered they would be sent via email. He added that while the vendor will know if the intended recipient has completed the survey, only the completion rate would be reported to the district.

Ms. Goldes asked if students would have the ability to comment on questions. Mr. Myers answered that there were textbox options on surveys. Dr. Ream added that textboxes slowed down the survey, so they would have to be added sparingly since longer surveys had lower completion rates.

Ms. Sullivan asked if the survey would be brought back to the committee before being sent to students. Dr. Ream affirmed.

C. Data-Related Next Steps

Dr. Ream provided a follow up on the feedback from the assessment presentation given at the last board meeting as follows:

- STAR, which seems to have served its purpose. Teachers and administrators have been asking for something different.
- Concern has been expressed that STAR isn't necessarily predictive of SBAC, and it has been agreed that there should be some alignment.
- Ease of reporting is important.
- Substitutions for STAR include MAP or IReady in upper level grades.
- Actionability of the tool should be a primary focus.

Mr. McKay said the district also was looking at longitudinal assessment. For example, a 4th grade teacher being able to see a 3rd grade student's performance. Mr. Myers added some of the benefits of longitudinal assessment for students as helping at the middle school and high school level and progressing on a path towards performing well on the ACT.

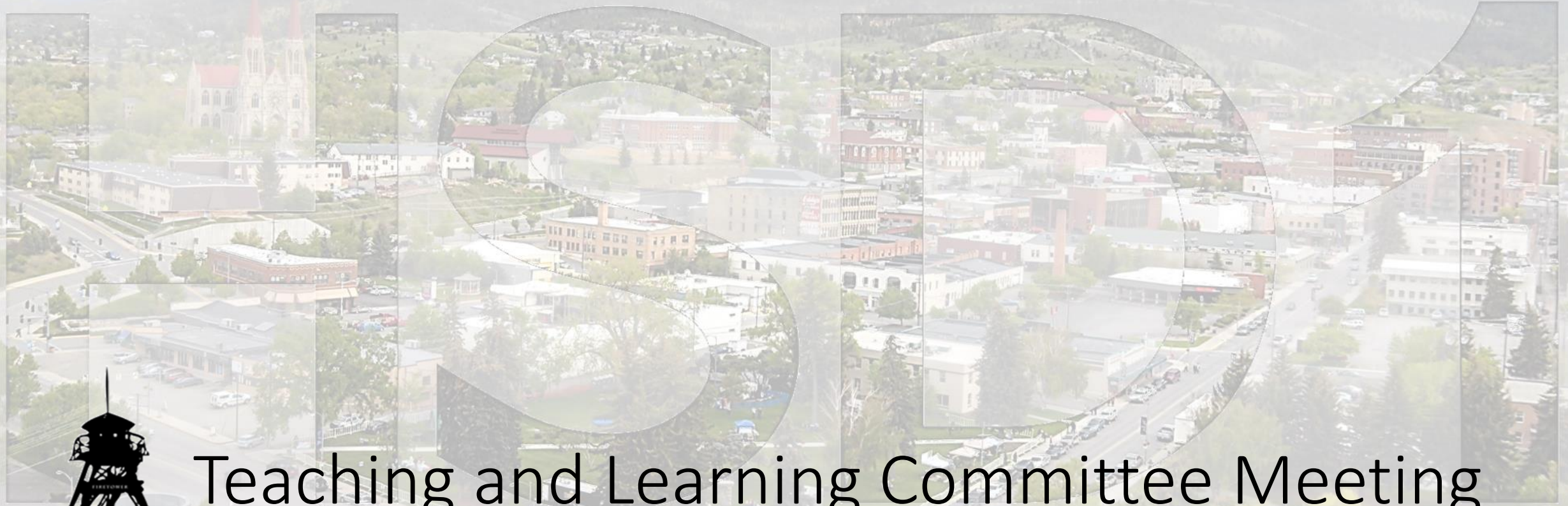
Ms. Sullivan asked the committee to send upcoming discussion items for future meetings. Dr. Ream added the next meeting would include a discussion on Performance Matters – one location for student assessments.

VI. BOARD COMMENTS

No additional comments were offered.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:06pm by Ms. Sullivan. The next Teaching and Learning Committee meeting will be at noon on April 1, 2020.




Teaching and Learning Committee Meeting

Helena Public Schools – May 6, 2020

Grading Update:

- Grading criteria has been finalized and will be public today
- Framework remains largely unchanged from 4/27 Board Update (presentation)
- Includes problem-solving FAQ section to help guide MS/HS student decisions pertaining to selecting a letter grade v. credit only

DRAFT: Grading for Remote Learning
School Building Closures, Spring 2020



Background
During the spring of the 2019/2020 school year, the Helena Public School experienced the physical closure of our school buildings as a result of the COVID-19 Coronavirus pandemic. Initially, closure decisions impacted the final two weeks of the third quarter. However, as closures were extended, it became clear that these closures would significantly impact the entire fourth quarter of the school year.

With a transition to remote learning, questions arose pertaining to grading. The sudden shift radically altered the nature of teaching and learning from our traditional, in-person environment to a completely remote, asynchronous environment. This complicated nearly every aspect associated with teaching and learning including how teachers are able to assess student learning in order to understand who has mastered specific concepts and which students require additional attention.

Under normal circumstances, educators must weigh a variety of formal and informal data points in generating what must be determined, a reliable and valid grade. The physical closure of school buildings has caused many of these data points to be, at best, complicated, and at worst, unavailable. Therefore, grace and understanding became an early priority for Helena educators as they worked remotely with their students.

After weeks of study and consideration, the below grading changes were finalized. Each change is structured to provide flexibility, ensuring that students are not penalized for encountering barriers to learning including access to technology, internet, resources, etc.

Our Commitment
As a district, we commit to ongoing understanding as we work with students and families throughout this crisis. We will continuously strive to assist our students both in obtaining the tools and resources they need for remote learning and in their efforts as they seek to learn in this new environment. Every effort, from teaching to grading, will emphasize the flexibility and understanding that we all need to transcend the physical, mental and emotional challenges of this COVID-19 Coronavirus pandemic.

High School Grading
Grading for high schools will remain consistent with past practices but will include an additional option for students to consider. Grading will adhere to the traditional letter grade scale. However, students will have the option of selecting a grade of "credit" instead of a traditional letter grade. A grade of "credit" will not factor into a student's grade point average (GPA) and will simply show that the student passed the class. **High School students will be required to inform their teacher of their grading intent for that class on or before (NEED).** Please note that after the deadline date of (NEED), no additional graded content will be assigned.

This change provides students with needed flexibility and will ensure that any impacts associated with the sudden shift to remote learning will not negatively impact a student's GPA or future, associated plans. Before making this decision, students, parents and guardians should consider the below:

- Students should check with colleges and universities that they may be interested in attending to understand how a grade of "credit" will be viewed during the admissions process.
- Students should consider whether their earned letter grade actually improves their GPA prior to making a decision. The grace period of time between the culmination of classes and the posting of final grades will provide students with the time needed to appropriately weigh all of their options.

Students who are behind academically simply need to respond to their teachers. In the spirit of flexibility, teachers will work with students to modify assignments and grading to ensure success. Furthermore, students will have a full two weeks after the semester ends to resolve any marks/grades of "incomplete." Please note that per state rules,

any incomplete grades resolved after (NEED) will negatively impact a student's extracurricular eligibility for the fall semester.

Middle School Grading
In consideration of grades at the middle school level, it was determined that our middle schools would align with high schools in adhering to the traditional letter grade scale. Many middle school students participate in high school level courses already which dictated a need for alignment. However, like our high schools, students will have the option of selecting a grade of "credit" instead of a letter grade. **Middle School students will be required to inform their teacher of their grading intent for that class on or before (NEED).** Please note that after the deadline date of (NEED), no additional graded content will be assigned.

Please see the above High School Grading section and the below Frequently Asked Questions section for additional information pertaining to the letter grade v. credit option.

Elementary Grading
Even under normal circumstances, grading at the elementary level is varied. It is very rare for a student at the elementary level to take a high school level class that may have future credit or grade point average implications. Therefore, grading at the elementary level this final fourth quarter will be purposefully shifted. Instead of a traditional fourth quarter report card, students and families will be provided with a progress report that provides additional information on the concepts that a child has mastered along with areas for growth.

In using this modified approach, teachers will focus more on feedback and less on traditional marks or grades. While a final format is still being finalized, students and parents can expect that this fourth quarter report will align directly with the content that their class has been learning this year including concepts covered during this closure. In utilizing this type of an approach, parents and future teachers will have a mutual understanding of their child's progress including areas of strength and concepts in need to additional attention. In essence, this modified approach will give us a running start into the next school year.

For parents of fifth graders transitioning to middle school, please know that this modified approach will not negatively impact your child in any regard. Middle school counselors will continue to work with fifth grade teachers to ensure that students are being scheduled into appropriate classes for next fall. An absence of traditional grades will not impact or alter our scheduling efforts. Rather, this qualitative approach to grading may enhance our ability to hit the ground running with our sixth graders this coming fall. Additionally, for parents of a student with an active IEP and/or 504 plan, please look for information from your case manager/school counselor on forthcoming elementary-to-middle school transition meetings. |

Frequently Asked Questions
Q: How will a "credit" grade factor into my child's Grade Point Average (GPA)?
A: No. This type of grade is purposefully unweighted and will not positively or negatively impact a student's GPA. Rather, a "credit" will show on the student transcript as a "P" indicating that the student successfully passed a class. This will be done without a grade/mark of "credit" being calculated into a student's GPA.

Q: My child has fallen behind in their assignments. Is it too late to catch-up and succeed this semester/quarter?
A: No, it is not too late in any regard. Teachers, counselors and administrators have been constantly working to remain connected to our students. As a first step towards success this quarter/semester, students need to respond to their teachers. Together, the student and teacher can develop a flexible plan that will ensure success. It is not too late to reengage but as the quarter/semester draws to an end, options in this regard will become more challenging to structure. Now is a perfect time to develop a plan for success.

Q: Will a grade of "credit" instead of a traditional letter grade harm my child's eligibility status for extracurricular activities/athletics?

A: No. A grade/mark of "credit" shows that a student successfully passed all of the requirements of a given class. While not calculated in their grade point average, the "credit" grade will show on their academic transcript as having successfully passed a class. This ensures that a student will not be negatively impacted from an eligibility standpoint.

Q: Can my child choose to change their grade after final grades are posted on (NEED)?
A: Not easily. To alter a grade after final grades have been posted, a student will need to appeal their grade in accordance with the process outline in the student handbook.

(Please include any other question/answers that you feel need to be listed)

Creating Meaningful Resources: Framework Development

- The Academics Team continues to work to provide tools/resources in real-time for teachers as needs arise
- The Remote Learning Framework was developed within the first two weeks of closure to share best practices and establish a “floor” of routines/schedules
 - Asynchronous recommendation
 - Virtual class meetings (wellness + academics)
 - Two graded assignments per week for each subject area
 - Assessment recommendations

Helena School District Elementary Remote Learning Instructional Framework

<p>Welcome to HSD Remote Learning! Remote learning is dramatically different from traditional classroom instruction, but the fundamental importance of the connection between a teacher and a student is the same. Teachers need to diligently connect with their students on a weekly basis and should share with their administrators any ongoing difficulties with connecting. It is critically important that students who are working at home can complete their work within a reasonable family schedule -- asynchronously. Additionally, within traditional school hours, all teachers, librarians, counselors, resource teachers, and administrators should be available for specific "Connection Times /Office Hours" when they can connect personally and answer questions about assigned work. All staff are also encouraged to post additional digital resources for families and students to use at their discretion for extension, practice, and enrichment. Resources should be linked through Clever to ensure ease of access.</p>	
K-1 Expectations*	2-5 Expectations*
Presence and Communication	Presence and Communication
Daily "Connection Time/Office Hours" for contact in Teams (Can be read-aloud, etc.) Reply to student and parent emails within one school day Weekly email with schedule and standards	Daily "Connection Time /Office Hours " in Teams Reply to student and parent emails within one school day Weekly email with schedule and standards including assignments
Curriculum and Assessment	Curriculum and Assessment
Daily lessons posted in teams including (post 1 week at a time): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Video (optional) • Links to resources • 2 Days of Reading (M/W) and 2 Days of Math(T/Th) • Science and Social Studies should be included for enrichment or scheduled in with Reading and Math lessons • PE, Music and Library teachers will provide suggested activities for each week, and will be available for "connection time" as well • School counselors will provide activities for social and emotional learning and will be available to supports students on their caseload Assessment Options: (parents encouraged to assist) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to district assessment document 	Daily Lessons posted in Teams including (post 1 week at a time): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Video (optional) • Links to resources • 2-3 Assignments in Teams • 2 Days of Reading (M/W) and 2 Days of Math (T/Th) • Science, Social Studies should be included for enrichment or scheduled in with Reading and Math lessons, but the total number of assignments for week should not exceed 2-3 in all subjects, and the schedule for the week should be communicated in a single weekly email (grade levels that departmentalize will need to collaborate to make sure this is not exceeded) • PE, Music and Library teachers will provide suggested activities for each week, and will be available for " connection time " as well • School counselors will provide activities for social and emotional learning and will be available to supports students on their caseload Assessment Options (All should be clearly marked as due Friday): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to district assessment document
Staff Development and PLC	
<p>Fridays will be reserved for enrichment and intervention for students, and teacher planning and posting of the following week's lessons. Staff meetings will be scheduled in mornings only and not scheduled on Fridays. Teachers are encouraged to attend short PD sessions on online learning beginning in April. Teachers are encouraged to collaborate on the COVID-19 Digital Learning Bridge Team for technology support. Due to building safety precautions, printed materials can only be made available as appropriate for students who are on IEP's or 504's. Other than these specific cases, all materials must be provided digitally. Resource teachers, title teachers, speech-language pathologists, and paraprofessionals will support students on their caseload digitally. Attendance exceptions will be made for any students due to extenuating circumstances in their home at the discretion of the building administrator. Health and medical consultation and providing support to students and staff as requested will be available through school nurses in all buildings. Teachers and administrations can email helpdesk@helenaschools.org if students have difficulty logging in.</p>	

*These expectations were developed using the Very Good Online Teaching expectations developed by the Montana Digital Academy.]

Helena School District Middle and High School Remote Learning Instructional Framework

Welcome to HSD Remote Learning! Remote learning is dramatically different from traditional classroom instruction, but the fundamental importance of the connection between a teacher and a student is the same. Teachers need to diligently connect with their students on a weekly basis and should share with their administrators any ongoing difficulties with connecting. It is critically important that students who are working at home can complete their work within a reasonable family schedule -- asynchronously. Additionally, within traditional school hours, all teachers, librarians, counselors, resource teachers, and administrators should be available for specific "office hours" when they can connect personally and answer questions about assigned work. All staff are also encouraged to post additional digital resources for families and students to use at their discretion for extension, practice, and enrichment. Resources should be linked through Clever to ensure ease of access. There are links embedded in this document that provide information to help you design and deliver your instruction while providing excellent feedback and support for students.

Be present*	Communicate*	Standards and Curriculum*	Clear Learning Expectations*	Lesson Structure*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Email a detailed weekly agenda by Monday morning to students for each course that you teach. <input type="checkbox"/> Host and post "office hours" in Teams -- at least an hour a day -- at a variety of times when you will be available to answer questions. <input type="checkbox"/> Check email and assignments throughout the day. Try to have a zero inbox at the end of the day. <input type="checkbox"/> Respond to emails and questions ASAP -- within 24 hours. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Acknowledge all emails from students and parents, even if you do not believe something justifies a response. <input type="checkbox"/> Use a professional tone in all communications. <input type="checkbox"/> Keep a smile in your emails. Stay positive and encouraging. <input type="checkbox"/> If you are using "live" sessions to communicate instructional information, be sure to record and post the session so all students can access the session. Live participation cannot be required. <input type="checkbox"/> Encourage students to continue to use a tool (planner, calendar, etc.) to help them keep track of assignments, office hours, due dates, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Connect weekly with your PLC(s) to align learning expectations for students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Align each week's learning target(s) to content area and literacy standards. <input type="checkbox"/> Use the curriculum resources provided by HSD. Supplement curriculum with district-approved online resources (i.e., NewsELA, CommonLit, Khan Academy, etc.). <input type="checkbox"/> Use grade-level, content-specific texts for students to respond to in writing. <input type="checkbox"/> Focus on skills instead of content. (This provides positive opportunities for feedback and will naturally discourage cheating). <input type="checkbox"/> Create quality questions for students to explore/investigate. <input type="checkbox"/> Printed materials can only be made available as appropriate for students who are on IEP's or 504's. Other than these specific cases, all materials must be provided digitally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Approximate guidelines for student workload: 10-20 minutes per day per class (MS) and 20-30 minutes per day per class (HS). <input type="checkbox"/> Chunk larger assignments into weekly or daily work to check for understanding and provide feedback. <input type="checkbox"/> Actively participate in online discussions by asking follow-up questions and providing feedback. <input type="checkbox"/> Design assessments and lessons that encourage higher-level thinking. <input type="checkbox"/> Communicate assessment tools clearly to students. <input type="checkbox"/> 1-2 (MS) or 2-3 (HS) assignments each week should go into PowerSchool (graded or participation points). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Include an opening activity for each week (think bell-ringer). <input type="checkbox"/> Have a mid-week check for understanding. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide actionable feedback on check(s) for understanding. See Providing students with meaningful feedback or RISE Feedback model for more information. <input type="checkbox"/> Have an end-of-week check for understanding, a student self-assessment, or a summative assessment. <input type="checkbox"/> List all lesson expectations weekly and communicate clear due dates for the week (date and time). Remain flexible and provide extensions as needed.
<p>Teachers are encouraged to attend short PD sessions on online learning beginning in April. Teachers are encouraged to collaborate on the COVID-19 Digital Learning Bridge Team for technology support. Resource teachers, title teachers, speech-language pathologists, and paraprofessionals will support students on their caseload digitally. Attendance exceptions will be made for any students who are unable to complete work due to extenuating circumstances in their home, at the discretion of the building administrator. Health and medical consultation and providing support to students and staff as requested will be available through school nurses in all buildings. Teachers and administrations can email helpdesk@helenaschools.org if students have difficulty logging in.</p>				

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Update on Spring/Summer Considerations for Small Groups

- In researching options for the spring, significant legal and technical issues exist that cloud potential plans for bringing small groups of students to school for specific instruction.



Spring Survey Discussion

- Prior to physical closure in mid-March, surveys were drafted and ready for spring implementation
- Surveys do not reflect remote learning and while feedback in that regard is important, altering questions would be a significant departure from our annual plans
- Options include:
 - Student, parent and employee surveys as planned (mid-late May)
 - Delete surveys from spring implementation due to ongoing situation
 - Revise surveys to include questions that pertain to remote learning
 - No survey implementation this spring



Your Helena Public Schools
...a great place to learn

DRAFT: Grading for Remote Learning

School Building Closures, Spring 2020



Background

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Under normal circumstances, educators must weigh a variety of formal and informal data points in generating what must be determined, a reliable and valid grade. The physical closure of school buildings has caused many of these data points to be, at best, complicated, and at worst, unavailable. Therefore, grace and understanding became an early priority for Helena educators as they worked remotely with their students.

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High School Grading

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This change provides students with needed flexibility and will ensure that any impacts associated with the sudden shift to remote learning will not negatively impact a student’s GPA or future, associated plans. Before making this decision, students, parents and guardians should consider the below:

- Students should check with colleges and universities that they may be interested in attending to understand how a grade of “credit” will be viewed during the admissions process.
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Students who are behind academically simply need to respond to their teachers. In the spirit of flexibility, teachers will work with students to modify assignments and grading provide students with a pathway forward. Furthermore, students will have a full two weeks after the semester ends to resolve any marks/grades of “incomplete.” The deadline to resolve an “incomplete” is on/before Wednesday, June 24th. Please note that per state rules, any

incomplete grades resolved after June 24th may negatively impact a student's extracurricular eligibility for the fall semester. Incomplete grades resolved after Wednesday, June 24th will need to be appealed to the superintendent for activities/athletics purposes.

Middle School Grading

In consideration of grades at the middle school level, it was determined that our middle schools would align with high schools in adhering to the traditional letter grade scale. Many middle school students participate in high school level courses already which dictated a need for alignment. However, like our high schools, students will have the option of selecting a grade of "credit" instead of a letter grade. ***Middle School students will be required to inform their teacher of their grading intent for that class on or before Wednesday, June 3rd.*** Note: Middle school students taking a high school level course will be required to inform their teacher of their grading intent for that class on or before Wednesday, June 10th (Algebra I, Spanish, and Honors Math I)

Please see the above High School Grading section and the below Frequently Asked Questions section for additional information pertaining to the letter grade v. credit option.

Elementary Grading

Even under normal circumstances, grading at the elementary level is varied. It is very rare for a student at the elementary level to take a high school level class that may have future credit or grade point average implications. Therefore, grading at the elementary level this final fourth quarter will be purposefully shifted. Instead of a traditional fourth quarter report card, students and families will be provided with a progress report that provides additional information on the concepts that a child has mastered along with areas for growth.

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Frequently Asked Questions

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Q: Can my child choose to change their grade after Wednesday, June 10th?

A: Not easily. To alter a grade after final grades have been posted, a student will need to appeal their grade in accordance with the process outline in the student handbook.