



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 – Special Board Meeting

May Butler Center | 55 S. Rodney Ave
Tuesday, November 26, 2019 – 11:00am

MINUTES - APPROVED

ATTENDEES

Trustees: Others:

Luke Muszkiewicz, Board Chair	Tyler Ream, Superintendent
Terry Beaver, Board Vice Chair	Barb Ridgway, Chief of Staff
Libby Goldes, Trustee	Janelle Mickelson, Business Services Administrator
Jeff Hindoiem, Trustee	Troy Shockley, Member of the Public

Trustees via Conference Call:

Sarah Sullivan, Board Past Chair
Jennifer Walsh, Trustee
John McEwen, Trustee

I. CALL TO ORDER

Boar Chair, Luke Muszkiewicz, called the meeting to order at 11:03am.

II. REVIEW OF AGENDA

No changes were requested.

III. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

None was offered.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Item for Action

1. HB 387: Montana Advanced Opportunity Act proposal

Ms. Ridgway provided an overview of the Montana Advanced Opportunities Act. She said the district intended to apply on behalf of the high school district, which could apply for 20% of the district's total quality educator payment. For the Helena high school district, that equates to \$144,166.

Ms. Ridgway detailed the specific uses of the funds detailed in the supporting document. She said that while the district doesn't have to submit a plan now, it must compete with all Montana

school districts in a first-come-first-serve rush at 8:00 on Monday, December 2, to receive the funds. Mr. Hindoien asked for confirmation that the funds were not merit-based, and Ms. Ridgway confirmed. Ms. Ridgway added that, once awarded, the funds could extend and increase annually through 2024. Mr. McEwen asked if the district had to apply each year, and Ms. Ridgway answered that she did not believe the District would be required to reapply.

Mr. Beaver asked why the elementary district was not applying. Ms. Ridgway answered that the decision was made to apply on behalf of the district where it would have the largest impact. The maximum amount the elementary district could apply for was approximately \$40,000. Mr. Beaver asked if the district would be competing with elementary districts. Ms. Ridgway stated the district would be competing all other districts.

Mr. Beaver asked if the 60%/40% split was predetermined and required by the state, and Ms. Ridgway answered that it was.

Ms. Goldes asked for the justification behind the decision to use a portion of the 60% of the funds to cover AP exams. Ms. Ridgway answered that the high school principals were consulted, and AP exam costs were flagged as an area that would reduce out-of-pocket costs for students and families. Ms. Goldes asked for an estimated number of students who did not attempt the AP exams because of costs. Ms. Ridgway said the district didn't know, so it would be interesting to see if the number attempting the exam increased if additional funding was available. Dr. Ream added that if a student mentioned to a staff member that he/she needed assistance with paying for the exam, assistance was available, but the district couldn't track students who didn't mention costs being a factor.

Mr. McEwen asked if the district could receive just a percentage of the requested \$144,166. Dr. Ream answered that full amounts were awarded until all the money was gone.

Ms. Walsh asked if there were any financial requirements to apply for the funds. Ms. Ridgway answered that the funds are on a first-come-first-serve basis. She added that areas of need were identified with the high school principals and that additional communication would occur if the funds are received.

V. BOARD COMMENT

Mr. Muszkiewicz voiced his appreciation to Ms. Ridgway and Dr. Ream for their work on identifying the funds and their work through the application process. He noted the importance of making the AP exams accessible to all students. Ms. Goldes referenced the Teaching & Learning Committee's discussions around research showing the attempt of the AP exams and classes translated to success in other academic areas. She added that it was important to emphasize some of the funds will apply toward CTE curriculum costs.

VI. VOTING

Mr. McEwen moved to accept the proposal as presented. Ms. Goldes seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Muszkiewicz adjourned the meeting at 11:17am.