



June 2020

To the students, parents, families, and community of the Helena Public Schools,

As we approach the end of this 2020/2021 school year, I want to say thank you for all that you have given, especially across these last sixteen months. I have been fortunate to serve as superintendent these last three years, across many highs and lows for our community, state, nation, and world. I want to thank you for this opportunity.

I would also like to express my love and support to everyone within our schools and community that experienced the passing of a loved one this year. It has been a trying year in every regard, but several families were disproportionately impacted. As a community, we must continue to support one another in honoring our mutual, interconnectedness.

To me, this mutual interconnectedness is one of the elements that makes Helena such a remarkable community. While the last sixteen months represents a period of time that we must never forget, it has amplified how much we need one another. No community ever achieves perfection in this regard but throughout Helena, a majority of these past two years has been spent collectively supporting one another in enduring hardship. As vaccine rates continue to rise and case rates continue to drop, certain norms return to our day to day lives. However, these norms are not without rightful reservation and a natural inclination to reflect on all that has occurred.

As I reflect, I do so with admiration and great respect for the students and families that I have had the opportunity to serve, and the colleagues with whom I have been fortunate to serve alongside as part of the Helena Public Schools. Very little of what has occurred was of our choosing as I still have yet to meet an individual that expressed his or her enjoyment of the COVID-19 pandemic. While resilience is often cited in association with the past year (plus), it was your compassion that will remain in my heart and mind.

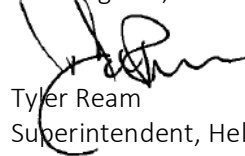
As we all know, compassion can be practiced and expressed in countless ways. Throughout the trials of the 2020 and 2021, we have been fortunate to experience every form of this powerful trait through the sentiments and deeds of our friends, family members, and fellow neighbors. We naturally became more aware of one another's needs and in doing so, paused at simple questions like, "how are you doing?" to authentically consider the answer. Life will inevitably return to its former hurry-up and rush pace but as it does, it is my hope that we continue to lead with our compassion, knowing how much we all need one another.

As Rex Weltz enters as Superintendent for the Helena Public Schools, I am excited for the future of our schools and community. With Rex being local, we have had the opportunity to collectively transition, and I have been deeply impressed with his energy, passion, and vision. Coupled with the distinguished professionals of our school district and our remarkable students and families, I believe in the renewal that is already taking place within and across our community. Rex is a talented leader, but he and his family will need your compassion and support as he takes on this important role in our school district.

As renewal occurs, I wish you all the needed rest and recuperation that will be vital in embracing the road forward. These past sixteen months have pulled at every thread that knits our lives together. As we reconnect and recapture many of the missing aspects of the last two years, let us do so with renewed compassion and a desire for deeper, more meaningful interpersonal connections.

Thank you all for the opportunity and the honor it has been to serve as part of the Helena community.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tyler Ream', written over the printed name.

Tyler Ream
Superintendent, Helena Public Schools