



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 – Budget and Finance Committee

Friday, November 05, 2021 – 12:00pm

MINUTES

ATTENDEES

Committee Members:

John McEwen, Committee Chair
Terry Beaver, Committee Member
Janet Armstrong, Committee Member

Others:

Rex Weltz, Superintendent
Brian Cummings, Assistant Superintendent
Luke Muszkiewicz, Board Chair
Janelle Mickelson, Business Services
Administrator
Josh McKay, Assistant Superintendent
Barb Ridgway, Chief of Staff
Stacy Collette, Human Resource
Administrator
Gary Myers, Education Technology Director
Andrew Minert, Technology Support
Services
Candice Delvaux, Executive Assistant
Karen Ogden, Communications Officer
Luke Muszkiewicz, Board Chair
Jane Shawn, HEA President

I. **CALL TO ORDER**

Committee Chair, John McEwen, called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.

II. **GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

No comments were offered.

III. **REVIEW OF AGENDA**

No changes were made to the agenda.

IV. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The committee reviewed and approved the 10.01.21 Budget and Finance Committee Meeting Minutes.

V. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/DISCUSSION**

A. Monthly Expenditure Report

The committee reviewed and discussed the monthly expenditure report. There was some recoding done for teacher's salaries and it put the educator salaries in the elementary in the red. It is not a concern because it is covered by other funds that are in the black. There was also an elementary budget adjustment for Special Education. Funds were transferred from the Superintendent's budget to the Special Education budget. Ms. Mickelson also reminded the committee that approximately \$7 million of expenditures were moved out of the Elementary and High School general fund budget and are being funded with ESSER money. Those expenditures will need to go back into the general fund budget once the ESSER money is exhausted.

B. Enrollment Trend Analysis Review and Discussion of Preliminary Enrollment Data from the October Count

The committee moved on to review the Enrollment Trend Analysis and Enrollment Data from the October count. The committee reviewed the projected general fund budget that is based on the fall count. There are four adjustment or part-time categories including the students that attend Explore School and are considered part-time. Kindergarten through 6th grade is funded differently than 7th grade through 12th grade. The middle school (7th and 8th) grades are funded at the high school level. Average Number Belonging (ANB) are your units that you count as full time, and students enrolled is a totally different number because you could have more students in the total enrolled number, but some of those students may be part-time students. Part-time is based on aggregate hours, with 0 to 179 not counted, 180 to 359 are counted as enrolled quarter-time, 360 to 539 are counted as enrolled half-time, and 540 to 719 are counted as enrolled three quarters-time, and anything above that is enrolled full-time. Then you take that adjusted enrollment number, you apply a percentage, and that gives you credit for your PIR days. That brings you to ANB, which is what we are funded under. The basic rates for ANB are about \$5,800 in the elementary and about \$7,400 in the high school.

The committee reviewed paperwork showing what the projected 2023 budget would be based off the ANB numbers. We are running off a three-year average in both the elementary and high school based on these numbers. If these numbers stood and the count in the spring was the same as our count in October this would be our budget. We would then be able to vote close to \$300,000 in the elementary and \$500,000 in the high school to get us back up to our highest budget. It is predicted that numbers will go down in the high school in the spring by almost two percent. Last year we lost a little over 250 in ANB in the elementary, and we only gained back approximately 105. We still have some students out there that we did not get back.

Superintendent Weltz commented. Students leaving happens in every state I have ever been in. It would be great to have a committee to determine where those students are going, how many are leaving, why they are leaving, and figure out how to keep them with us.

The committee discussed how important the upcoming levy is to the budget. The budget the committee is looking at today is for staffing. The committee then viewed a historical chart of enrollment, which included a summary of the grade level bands. We are losing around 125 students from every grade level in our high school district to East Helena. So, we are going from 8,000 to about 7,550. Next year we will be about the same as we are this year because we have some bigger classes coming into the high school.

The committee reviewed the data displaying the number of children that have entered our district, which displays the out of district calculation. We have about 75 new students that enter our district every year into the high school. Some East Helena children still come our way and go through our out of district application process. We then look at what their school request is and see if the school that they requested has open seats. Our procedure has been to take them if they fit those criteria and are in good standing to come in.

The committee continued their discussion on levies. If the general fund levy fails, you cannot run it a second time. You can continue to run the building reserve levy until it passes. The group discussed that in the spring a decision will have to be made if they will run the general fund levy and the building reserve levy at the same time.

The group then discussed how the district does not receive any money for Pre-K students at Ray Bjork unless they are a kindergarten aged student receiving services in a Pre-K environment. Some districts designate their Pre-K students as two-year kindergarten students, and the program is called Early Entry rather than Pre-K. The committee discussed the extensive work that would be required in creating an Early Entry program in the district, and it would need to be determined if it would be an equitable venture.

C. Topics For Future Meetings

The committee moved on to discuss topics for future Budget and Finance and Committee Meetings. One of the topics would be regarding the Special Education Audit. In December another topic would be a summary recap of how we spent, and how we intend to spend the ESSER money. In the spring the committee would like to discuss the long-term spending model. The group discussed where we are currently with our reconciliation with Hulteng, and the amount of bond monies that we have left to spend. There was a meeting with administrators in which they discussed additional items that are specific to the bond such as security fobs for various doors that were not fobbed, and any other security work that needs to be done including finishing the hallway speakers at C.R. Anderson. They will go through those lists from each of the buildings, prioritize the lists, and begin to do that work and complete the work to finish out the bond before the termination date of December of next year. Another topic the committee would like to discuss at a future meeting is negotiations. The deferred maintenance report is another topic the group would like to discuss in December or January.

In closing, the committee discussed building improvements such as roofs and boilers. Right now, the current projects being done are the roof improvements that are directly related to their 20-year assessment. Each year SMA Architecture gives us a list of status for our roofs throughout the district, and we began the bid process for those. For the other items, we are going through the deferred maintenance assessment with Hulteng to evaluate where we are with all our facilities. We will then prioritize items that are in disrepair or in need of repair immediately.

VI. BOARD COMMENT

There were no additional board comments.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. McEwen adjourned the meeting at 12:55 p.m.