



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 Policy Committee Meeting

Tuesday, December 7th, 2021
Lincoln Center
1325 Poplar St., Helena, MT 59601
And via
TEAMS

MINUTES

Attendees

Committee: Others:

Libby Goldes, Committee Chair	Rex Weltz, Superintendent
John McEwen, Committee Member	Josh McKay, Assistant Superintendent
Janet Armstrong, Committee Member	Barb Ridgway, Chief of Staff
	Brian Cummings, Assistant Superintendent
	Stacy Collette, Human Resources Director
	Elizabeth Kaleva, District Counsel
	Jane Shawn, HEA President
	Janelle Mickelson, Business Manager
	Luke Muszkiewicz, Board Chair
	Karen Ogden, Communications Specialist
	Gary Myers, Education Technology Director
	Jonna Schwartz, Instructional Coach

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 12:05 pm by Committee Chair, Libby Goldes.

II. REVIEW OF AGENDA

No changes were requested to the agenda.

III. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

IV. REVIEW OF THE 11.02.2021 POLICY COMMITTEE MINUTES

The committee reviewed and approved the minutes from the 11.02.2021 committee meeting.

V. PRESENTATION OF POLICIES FOR SECOND READING/REVIEW

A. Policy 1085: Uniform Complaint Policy

Ms. Ridgway commented. You have before you the second reading on Uniform Complaint. This did not go to the full board because we changed some wording. There are changes reflected on lines 42, 43, 41, 52, and 57. The language was changed at all levels from “has reason to believe the administrator’s or supervisor’s decision was made in error” to “disagrees with the findings of the administrator or supervisor”. Additional changes are reflected on lines 70 through 73, 79, 80, 87 through 90, 104, 105, and 106 through 109.

Elizabeth Kaleva, District Counsel, discussed that we want to be consistent and clear in our procedures. John McEwen, Committee Member, commented that there are too many days in the procedure. The committee discussed the process at every level, and how much time that is needed at each level. The committee determined that the comma on line 18 would be removed. The committee also discussed about possibly changing Administrator on lines 26 and 31 to building administrator. The committee also discussed the appeal date and the possibility of adding this phrase on line 35, “Additional timelines may be waived with the agreement of both parties.” It was also discussed about possibly removing the comma on line 104 after the word meeting.

Jonna Schwartz, Instruction Coach, commented regarding the policy. She mentioned that she is concerned by the guaranteed levels of complaint in the policy, the number of days the district has to investigate and rule at each level, and the lack of explanation regarding investigating at each level of appeal. The theme of her comments is concern for the systems we put in place and how those systems function for the people they are meant to serve and that the use of the policy should be easy.

Jane Shawn, HEA President, commented regarding Human Resources from the November 2nd meeting minutes, and the committee discussed where Human Resources would be utilized in this process. Ms. Shawn commented regarding the timeline and asked if the 30 calendar days needs to be at the level 3, 4, and 5 if there is no new information. The committee discussed if 30 calendar days would be needed at those levels. Ms. Shawn recommended that on line 63 the words “days of” be added after the word calendar.

Superintendent Weltz commented that he would like to recommend the Assistant Superintendents have the full 30 days with the demand of their schedule and all that is on their workload, but at his level of Superintendent, reduce the time to 15 days. That recommendation would be reflected on line 86, in changing thirty (30) calendar days to fifteen calendar days.

The committee also discussed that the County Superintendent process could be mentioned in procedure. The committee determined that Policy 1085: Uniform Complaint Policy would be brought back for more discussion next month.

B. Policy 3050: Student Discipline

The committee discussed Policy 3050: Student Discipline. The committee reviewed the language stated on lines 63 through 70. The committee discussed potentially changing the language beginning on line 63 which states “The Board is obligated to expel for a definite period of at least one (1) calendar year any student who uses, possesses, controls, or transfers a firearm” to instead state “The Board will follow federal law for any student who uses, possesses, controls, or transfers a firearm on school property”. The committee also discussed potentially updating the language on lines 42 through 43, “Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling illegal drugs or controlled substances, including medical marijuana, look-alike drugs, and drug paraphernalia”. Ms. Ridgway and Ms. Kaleva discussed that they would look up the updated language. The committee determined that Policy 3050: Student Discipline would be reviewed again at the next committee meeting, and nothing would be presented to the full Board at the next full Board meeting.

VI. SUPERINTENDENT OR BOARD COMMENTS

Luke Muszkiewicz, Board Chair, commented that he appreciated the discussion and that he learned a lot. Superintendent Weltz commented that the grievance procedure is an effort to make it better and stronger and he appreciates the conversation around this policy.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Committee Chair, Ms. Goldes, adjourned the meeting at 1:17 p.m.