



*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 Meeting  
Wednesday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022 – 12:00pm

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## MINUTES

### ATTENDANCE

*Trustees:*

Jennifer McKee, Committee Chair  
Siobhan Hathhorn, Committee Member  
Jennifer Walsh, Committee Member

*Others:*

Rex Weltz, Superintendent  
Jane Shawn, HEA President  
Josh McKay, Assistant Superintendent  
Gary Myers, Director of Educational Technology  
Candice Delvaux, Executive Assistant  
Brian Cummings, Assistant Superintendent  
Melissa Romano-Lehman, Instructional Coach  
Joslyn Davidson, Curriculum Administrator  
Kaitlyn Hess, HSD TOSA  
Karen Ogden, Communications Officer  
Barb Ridgway, Chief of Staff  
Kayla Ryan, Instructional Coach  
Abby Kuhl, Instructional Coach  
Kelly Connolly, Instructional Coach  
Ashlie Buresh, Instructional Coach  
Jessie Mitchell, Instructional Coach

### I. CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting was called to order at 12:02 pm by Committee Chair, Jennifer McKee.

### II. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

### III. REVIEW OF AGENDA

No changes were requested to the agenda.

#### IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The committee reviewed and approved the minutes from the 01.12.21 Teaching and Learning Committee Meeting.

#### V. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/DISCUSSION

##### A. Overview of Winter Benchmark Data

The committee began the meeting by reviewing the winter benchmark data. Kaitlyn Hess, HSD Tosa, reviewed a slide titled “Assessment Administration” with the committee. The slide stated that:

- January 10-28-In person test administration for grade levels K-11.
- K-5 completion rate: 97% in Reading and Math; 6-8 completion rate: 90% in Reading and Math; 9-12: 68% Math, 77% Reading.
- Kindergarten took the Acadience Reading and ESGI Math. ESGI Math is an individualized assessment for the classroom that does generate overall scores to report out.
- 1<sup>st</sup> grade took the Acadience Reading and iReady Math.
- Grades 2-11 took iReady Reading and Math.
- Grades 6-8 tested in a one-week period on a block schedule. Students took the tests over two days in different classes.
- Grades 9-12 at both high schools tested Reading and Math on the same days at the same time. Each test was given during an 80-minute assessment block and students tested with their 2<sup>nd</sup> period teacher.
- Students made up or completed their test during a makeup time period designated at each school. Making up the test was allowed for students who were quarantined or at home. Every possible attempt was made for students to take the test in person.

The committee reviewed a slide titled, “K-1 Fall to Winter 2021-2022 Acadience Reading”. One part of the chart displayed Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade reading data from fall to winter for 2021-2022. The other side of the chart displayed Acadience Reading Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Trend Data from fall to winter last year compared to fall to winter this year. Ms. Hess commented. You'll see that we've made some big gains in both Kindergarten and First grade this year. We have grown about 11 points in Kindergarten and 8 points in First grade.

The committee reviewed a slide titled “Grades 1-5 Fall to Winter 2021-2022 iReady Data in Reading and Math”. Ms. Hess commented. You'll have to bear in mind with these next slides that first grade with Reading, it's only reflecting a small group of kids that we are piloting at some schools, but the Math data is all our First grade. So, a lot of the First-grade winter reading data is going to be seen in the Acadience scores, and not in the iReady scores. Last year, for fall and winter Math we saw a 12-point increase, and a 23-point increase for fall and winter Math this year. So, a substantial amount of growth this year compared to last year.

The committee reviewed a slide titled, “Grades 1-5 Fall to Winter 2021-2022 iReady Data in Reading and Math”. Ms. Hess commented. We saw significant gains across the board in grades 2 through 5 in Reading and Math. Third grade Reading is looking really promising, and don't forget,

we have a whole other half of the year left, so those numbers are going to keep growing. This is a very rigorous assessment. Any criterion reference assessment that uses the national Common Core Standards is incredibly rigorous. On this graph we are comparing the kids to themselves, and what they can do. We are not looking at them on a percentile ranking, this is just what these kids are capable of doing. If we look at third grade Reading in the winter, we have 66% of our kids who are on grade level, meaning that they meet enough of the standards for them to be on grade level. There is a positive correlation between iReady test scores and SBAC test scores. When we are looking at this data, we can look at the green, yellow, and red tiers and see where students fall within the tiers; but it doesn't necessarily tell us who's growing within the tiers. So, what we have on this next slide are the growth percentages.

The committee reviewed the next slide titled, "Grades 1-5 Fall to Winter 2021-2022 iReady data in Reading and Math". This slide contained information with the median percent typical growth in Reading which was 92% and the median percent typical growth in Math which was 65%. It also has different columns. The first column shows the percent that met typical growth in Reading, the second column displays the percent of students with improved placement in Reading, the third column displays the percent that met typical growth in Math, and the last column shows the percent of students with growth in Math. Ms. Hess commented. Typically, what we think about with students, is we want them to make one year's growth in one year's time. It's very possible with just your core curriculum to make two year's growth in one year's time. If you need a student to make more than that, that's where the interventions come into play. A lot of the students that were low and had targeted interventions have made exponential growth. As they get more on grade level, it's harder to make growth, but we will see more of that once we hit June and our final benchmark.

The committee reviewed a slide titled, "Grades 6-8 Fall to Winter 2021-2022 iReady Data in Reading and Math." Ms. Hess commented. Now we will see the same set of data, but in sixth through eighth grade from fall to winter of last year, during 2020 to 2021. You'll see we don't have much growth between the two; four points in Reading and eleven points in Math. Then we get over to this year, and we have seven points growth in Reading and fifteen points growth in Math. It is not nearly the amount of growth we're seeing in K-5, but we're still growing more than we were last year. Then over here, it is broken out by grade level for the growth this year in Reading and Math from fall to winter. We are seeing the most gains in sixth grade, and then it starts to taper out in seventh grade. That is a trend you see in almost all our assessments that come seventh and eighth grade, the growth slows a little bit.

The committee reviewed a slide titled, "Grades 6-8 Fall to Winter 2021-2022 iReady Data in Reading and Math". This slide contained information with the median percent typical growth in Reading which was 74% and the median percent typical growth in Math which was 83%. It also has different columns. The first column shows the percent that met typical growth in Reading, the second column displays the percent of students with improved placement in Reading, the third column displays the percent that met typical growth in Math, and the last column shows the percent of student with growth in Math.

Joslyn Davidson, Curriculum Administrator, commented. With the Literacy Grant we have been really focusing on Reading for a number of years. For the last two to three years, we've started to develop the same sort of intervention programming for Math. Secondly, when you're looking at

students and their reading capabilities in elementary, their minds are still like sponges, so you can see more dramatic growth particularly at the lower grade levels. It's harder to fill gaps in Math for students to some extent because it's so content driven. We are working on building the programming for Math to match the level of programming we have for Reading intervention right now.

The committee reviewed a slide titled "Grades 1-8 National Norms and National Placement Distribution Comparison". Ms. Hess commented. We didn't give iReady prior to last year so we don't have that district-wide data, but iReady did have some historical national norms. You'll see for both Reading and Math, grades one through eight, we're either back to where we were pre-COVID or just a little bit above. This slide breaks it out into five tiers. Tier 1 stands for mid on-grade or above, and this is students who have met the minimum requirements for the expectations of college-and career-ready standards in their grade level. Tier 2 stands for early on-grade, and this is students who have only partially met these grade-level expectations. Tier 3 stands for 1 Grade Below, and this is students placed one year below grade-level. Tier 4 stands for 2 Grades Below, and this is students placed two years below grade-level. Tier 5 stand for 3+ Grades Below, and this is students placed three or more years below grade-level. Even though we saw a little bit slower growth from fall to winter in sixth through eighth than we did in Kindergarten through fifth for the District, here we are seeing that we are on or above those pre-COVID levels and we are definitely above the national average for fall to winter for all the grades.

The committee reviewed the final slide titled "Grades 9-12 Fall to Winter 2021-2022 iReady Data in Reading and Math". Ms. Hess commented. We have last year's fall to winter growth in Reading and Math, and on the right, we have this year's winter growth for Reading and Math. Our data for high school is coming in similar or a little bit above for growth than last year.

## VI. BOARD COMMENTS

Siobhan Hathhorn, Committee Member, commented. Generally, the growth data looks good, there's very few areas where it's either flat or not significant, and it's exciting to see that we're headed in the right direction.

Jennifer Walsh, Committee Member, commented. I just wanted to say that any growth is good, and that's just exciting in itself. It is validation on how hard our teachers have been working to support kids and fill those education gaps that have been created through COVID. I'm really excited to see how much more that we can grow, and I'm really excited to see just how much we've already experienced.

Jennifer McKee, Committee Chair, commented. These numbers happen because of people working so hard, and it's so awesome to see it. It's interesting to see the emotion of the last two years was so real in our lives and continues to be real, and there is this accepted belief that things are worse than they used to be but because of all this work they're better than they used to be. It's important to separate how we feel about the last two years with what we've done. We've done more than the usual two-year span because we had to overcome all the challenges, and the fact that we have still come out ahead is totally impressive.

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:52 p.m. by Ms. McKee.