



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 Work Session Minutes

Tuesday, March 22nd, 2022 | Tour at 3:30 / 4:00pm | Hawthorne Elementary and via TEAMS

MINUTES

ATTENDEES

Trustees *Others*

Luke Muszkiewicz, Board Chair	Rex Weltz, Superintendent
Siobhan Hathhorn, Vice Chair	Josh McKay, Assistant Superintendent
Terry Beaver, Trustee	Barb Ridgway, Chief of Staff
John McEwen, Trustee	Janelle Mickelson, Business Services Administrator
Jennifer McKee, Trustee	Stacy Collette, Human Resources Director
Janet Armstrong, Trustee	Karen Ogden, Communications Officer
Libby Goldes, Trustee	Brian Cummings, Assistant Superintendent
Jennifer Walsh, Trustee	Gary Myers, Director of Educational Technology
	Robert Brewer, Facilities Manager
	Justine Alberts, Principal of Hawthorne Elementary
	Kelly Connolly, Instructional Coach
	Heather Bode, Third Grade Teacher
	Brit McMahan, Special Education
	Sarah Greenwood, School Psychologist
	Hope Morrison, School Librarian
	Brittany Renshaw, Fourth Grade Teacher
	Nicole Evans, Music Teacher
	Many Hawthorne Staff Members

I. TOUR OF HAWTHORNE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

II. CALL TO ORDER/ PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Board Chair Luke Muszkiewicz called the meeting to order at 4:06 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. REVIEW OF AGENDA

Board Chair Luke Muszkiewicz commented. Mr. Cartwright and Mr. Brouwer from Growing Friends of Helena are not able to present until 5:30 p.m. so we may need to move that to the end of our agenda tonight if we get to Items for Information before 5:30 p.m.

IV. PRESENTATION:

Hawthorne Elementary Principal, Justine Alberts, began with a Power Point presentation which she presented to the Trustees. Principal Alberts commented. Every morning we begin with the Pledge of Allegiance and the Hawthorne Pledge. The mission of Hawthorne Elementary is to collaborate with students, staff, and the external community to provide a vibrant, robust education for all students. In addition to providing a safe and inclusive environment, Hawthorne highlights each student's abilities as a unique learner and individual person. Ultimately, we work to instill a love of learning and a sense of belonging which stay with students through all educational endeavors. Hawthorne honors the needs of students and provides opportunities for children to be children-to play, work through social encounters with support, and keep active learning a part of the academic day. Hawthorne staff and students collaborate with all stakeholders to build a sense of community, so students connect learning to real-world experiences. Hawthorne students are engaged in high-level thinking and supported in accessing rigorous content in an effort to reach proficiency in all content areas and standards. Hawthorne supports student's social-emotional learning and growth, providing them with many tools to support their independent sense of belonging, self-awareness, and ability to self-regulate.

Principal Alberts shared a slide that showed how many staff members and classrooms there are at Hawthorne Elementary.

Classrooms

- 10 general education classrooms
 - 2 Kindergarten
 - 2 First
 - 1 Second
 - 1 Second/Third Combo
 - 1 Third
 - 1 Fourth
 - 1 Fourth/Fifth Combo
 - 1 Fifth

Staff

- 10 classroom teachers
- 1 Special Education educator
- .5 Counselor
- .5 Librarian
- .5 Music & PE-share with Kessler

- .5 SLP
- .25 Nurse
- 1 School Psych-2 days per week
- Paraeducators: 2 SPED, 2 Gen. Edu, 3 Overage
- 1 Day and 1 Evening Custodian
- 1 Food Service Staff
- 2 SACC Employees
- 1 Administrative Assistant
- 1 Instructional Coach

Principal Alberts shared a slide that showed the student demographics of Hawthorne.

- 195 students
 - Enrollment in 2020-2021 was 184 students
- Average Daily Attendance Percentage
 - 93%
- Conference Attendance
 - 96% in November (85% in person, 11% online/phone)
 - 96% in March (89% in person, 7% online/phone)
- Student subgroups:
 - Individualized Education Plans:23%
 - Students with academic/behavioral/communication goals:21 (11%)
 - Students on speech only education plans: 23 formal, 5 informal (12%)
 - 1 Student with a 504: >1%
 - 10 Students who attend PEAK: 5%
- Free and Reduced (2019-2020): 24%

Principal Alberts commented. This year we have focused on SOAR which stands for: show kindness, belong, achieve, and inspire. We wanted to encompass all the things that we are doing in the building such as SLT, WIN, Tier I Instruction, Community, PAX, A-SEL, Self-Restoration, and Student Leadership. Principal Alberts discussed the behavior, social/emotional, and academics tier systems that they use at Hawthorne. Principal Alberts commented regarding teaching and learning at Hawthorne and that includes instructional framework, research-based practices for Tier I instructions, WIN-ELA and Math, performance and skill assessments, standard-based grading, data driven instruction and decisions, PLC process, conversation starters-not enders, and curiosities and trends. Principal Alberts then went through Hawthorne's benchmark assessment data, growth monitoring in iReady data, and performance by domain data.

Kelly Connolly, Instructional Coach, shared a slide about the school leadership team at Hawthorne. She also shared the Hawthorne Roadmap: Goals for 2021-22 and the School Level Action Plan.

- Meets Bi-Monthly
 - Data & Curriculum
 - Classroom & Instruction

- Drivers
 - Need
 - Understanding
 - Change
 - Question
 - Curious
- Included Areas
 - ASEL, PAX, and Community
- Includes Staff in the learning
 - Embedded PD
 - One-on-one meeting and coaching
 - Feedback
 - Positive Peer Walkthroughs

Heather Bode, third grade teacher at Hawthorne, shared and discussed a slide about PAX at Hawthorne.

- PAX Partners
- Coaching
- Whole-school Implementation
- Attend district PAX meetings
- Partner leads one staff meeting per month
- 6 partners meet 1 time per month
- Data collection-developing tie-in to SLT
- Good Behavior Game: do more, see more, hear more, feel more
- Tootles
- PAX Pebbles

Brit McMahon, Special Education teacher at Hawthorne discussed the ASEL, MTSS, and RTI process at Hawthorne. Ms. McMahon went through the ASEL process and discussed each step in greater detail.

- Step 1: present student of concern to ASEL
- Step 2: coordinating and planning
- Step 3: ASEL meeting
- Step 4: next steps

Sarah Greenwood, School Psychologist, discussed the systems of support at Hawthorne by using a case study example of Student A and went into detail about target behaviors, data collection, interventions, and short-term and long-term goals.

Hope Morrison, School Librarian at Hawthorne, discussed the library program at Hawthorne including the instructional model-new standards, schoolwide projects: You've Been Booked, and teacher collaboration, community engagement including the Montana Book Company Book Fair, and utilizing social media, successes, and goals looking forward.

Brittany Renshaw, fourth grade teacher at Hawthorne, discussed the student council at Hawthorne that have coordinated with PTO and have been involved with the community. Ms. Renshaw also discussed the Yearbook Committee at Hawthorne. School-wide projects this year included: disguise a turkey, caroling, May Day, and hiking. Community involvement this year included holiday grams, May Day, volunteers, and rice bags for assisted living.

Principal Alberts concluded the Hawthorne presentation by discussing the different activities Parent Council have been involved in including Artist In Residence, Parent-Teacher Conferences, Hawthorne Hearts, and Fundraising and Community Building. Principal Alberts also discussed how important community partnerships are to Hawthorne including partnering with Holter Museum of Art, Federal Reserve Bank, the HUB, Cohesion Dance Project, HEF, Community Neighbors, Growing Friends of Helena, Angel Fund of Helena, and the Montana Book Company. For celebrations this year at Hawthorne, over \$7,000 has been awarded to Hawthorne educators through HEF funds. There have been student recognitions through United Way and Hershey's Heartwarming Grant.

Trustee Libby Goldes commented. It was a very informative presentation. Thank you for all of the efforts that everybody made. It's wonderful to hear about the different tools and interventions that you are using to help meet the needs of your students. Does Hawthorne have much of a transient population?

Principal Alberts commented. To a certain extent we do, and we have a lot of programs that are in place that help our transient students.

Siobhan Hathhorn, Vice Chair, commented. Thank you for the presentation. The staff here feels very cohesive and organized with many layers of interventions. I am very impressed with the level of care and organization you have. I really liked that you created your measurable goals with your school leadership team.

Trustee Terry Beaver commented. I am very much impressed with the individual concern that you have for each student and the potential alleviations they have for remediation or the progressive ability for those students who are excelling. It is a collaborative effort among the entire faculty, and it is very impressive. Will you still have two combo classes next year?

Principal Alberts replied. I believe so, but I do not have a final number yet.

Trustee John McEwen commented. Thank you, Justine, and staff. Does a student get referred for behavior and academics? How many students can this school hold?

Principal Alberts replied. Yes, they can be referred if there are any concerns. I believe we can go up to the mid 200's for students in the school.

Trustee Jennifer McKee commented. Thank you for your time and the great presentation. We heard about your social/emotional supports and that is awesome, and then you see

how it translates into the academic progress that you have made-those growth charts were outstanding. Great work.

Trustee Janet Armstrong commented. I have three children that graduated from Hawthorne and there is a noticeable difference from what I see today to what they experienced. There is more cohesion in how the entire school approaches things, and I really appreciate that and commend you for it.

Superintendent Rex Weltz commented. Thank you for presenting. It was great you had your staff present as well, and I think that means a lot to the Board to hear from the staff. I appreciate the systems that you have in place. The music performance that we started off with was phenomenal. What I heard tonight was that your staff is proud of this school, they are proud of each other, and they are proud of their community. I think that is testament to their leader and a testament to the culture you have here. We appreciate you and your staff, and what you do for kids.

Luke Muszkiewicz, Board Chair, commented. I am very thankful to be here tonight, and to learn about what you do for students and their families each and every day. We are very grateful for you, and we can't wait to be back. Thank you so much.

V. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Rex Weltz discussed recognition in his Superintendent Report which included Jefferson Elementary site visit, PAL site visit, Distinguished Educator Grants, Capital High Boys Basketball AA State Champions and the coaches, cheerleaders, stunt team, dance team, band, and the student body. Superintendent Weltz continued his recognition by recognizing the Capital High Science Bowl Team that finished 2nd place at state. He recognized Helena High seniors Lucy Lantz and Erik Callery who have been named National Merit Finalists. Superintendent Weltz concluded recognition by thanking Russel Lay-Bridge Engineer for Morrison Maierle and thanked Morrison Maierle for sponsoring a bridge building contest for Capital and Helena High students and awarding scholarships for the winners.

Superintendent Weltz moved on to the New Business portion of his Superintendent Report and discussed the Kessler Elementary Principal selection, District mental health support planning work, the RFQ for facilities, and mentioned that CRDC and ESSER data collection is completed.

Superintendent Weltz concluded his Superintendent Report by discussing his meetings and outreach within the community including meeting with the AA Superintendents, HEA, HEF, HEF-Executive Committee, Parent Advisory, Cabinet, Lewis and Clark Board of Health, the media, and MQEC Board of Directors.

VI. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment offered.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Items for Information

1. Growing Friends of Helena Partnership

Ms. Stacy Collette, Human Resources Director, commented. The Helena Public Schools and Growing Friends of Helena have been in partnership for the last several decades. In an effort to continue our collaborative efforts to improve the green space for our 19 facilities and to engage students and staff in a community building opportunity, we have committed to activities that would take place on Friday, April 30, 2022, which is Arbor Day. Paul Cartwright, former Executive Director of Growing Friends, discussed what planting Growing Friends has done in the past in the District, and how they would like to partner with the Helena School District going forward. Mr. Cartwright went into further detail about the Arbor Day planting event and discussed how Growing Friends would like to partner with the Helena School District and replant trees at both of the high schools.

Luke Muszkiewicz, Board Chair, commented. Thank you very much. Growing Friends of Helena has been a wonderful partner of the Helena School District and we appreciate you building momentum around this and identifying where these projects are most needed.

Trustee Jennifer McKee commented. Where are the trees located that you are replanting at Helena High?

Mr. Cartwright replied. The trees that we will be replanting are the boulevard trees that are on all three sides of Helena High.

Mr. Cartwright discussed some of the expenses associated with the trees that the District would be responsible for. Mr. Cartwright also discussed the process of grinding tree stumps, and the costs associated with that process.

Trustee Terry Beaver commented. What species of trees are located on the north side of Jefferson Elementary?

Mr. Cartwright replied. Those are Linden trees.

Mr. Ben Brouwer, Executive Director of Growing Friends of Helena, introduced himself to the Trustees.

That concluded the Growing Friends of Helena presentation.

B. Consent Action Items

1. Approval of the 02.22.2022 Board of Trustees Work Session Minutes

Luke Muszkiewicz, Board Chair, commented. I would entertain a motion for the Consent Action Items.

Motion: Trustee Libby Goldes moved to approve the 02.22.2022 Board of Trustees Work Session Minutes as presented. Trustee John McEwen seconded the motion.

Public Comment: None.

Vote: 8-0 motion carries unanimously.

C. Items for Action

1. Consideration of Ballot Language for General Fund Levy Propositions

Ms. Janelle Mickelson, Business Services Administrator, commented. The Lewis and Clark County Elections Office (election administrator) has requested the ballot language for the propositions to be voted on in the upcoming election to be submitted to them by March 24th, 2022. Trustees must pass a resolution stating the exact levy amount, the estimated number of mills, and the tax impact on a home with a market value of \$100,000 and a home with a market value of \$200,000. The resolution must include the durational limit, if any, on the levy. The highest levy that can be requested for the elementary general fund is one hundred sixty thousand thirty-two DOLLARS (\$160,032), which is approximately 1.34 mills. Passage of the proposal will increase the taxes on a home with a market value of \$100,000 by approximately \$1.81/year and on a home with a market value of \$200,000 by approximately \$3.62/year. The highest levy that can be requested for the high school general fund is two hundred ninety-one thousand eight hundred thirty-six DOLLARS (\$291,836), which is approximately 2.21 mills. Passage of the proposal will increase the taxes on a home with a market value of \$100,000 by approximately \$2.98/year and on a home with a market value of \$200,000 by approximately \$5.97/year. The \$291,836 does not increase our budget by that amount. Due to our declining enrollment the actual increase if this levy passes is only about \$8,000. The law allows us to ask taxpayers to bring us back up to where we were, but the state will not give us any money. Other considerations in the election is there are three open Trustee positions in the elementary (K-12 positions). The deadline to file a Declaration of Intent and Oath of Candidacy is March 24th, 2022. The deadline for filing a declaration of intent to be a write-in candidate is 5:00 p.m. on March 31st, 2022.

Luke Muszkiewicz, Board Chair, commented. For the elementary ballot language, we would have seven trustees voting, and for the high school we would have

eight trustees voting with Trustee Jennifer Walsh included as our high school representative. I just appreciate this community's generosity and support for public education. We run general fund levies on a regular basis, and I think because of the great work that our educators do, our community is grateful for that, appreciates that, and generally tends to pass those levies. I just don't want the routine nature of that to suggest that we as a Board do not take this ask seriously. We consider the impact to taxpayers, and we are incredibly thankful for that continued investment. I would entertain a motion regarding the Helena Elementary Trustee Resolution-Approval of Ballot Language.

a) Helena Elementary Trustee Resolution-Approval of Ballot Language

Motion: Trustee John McEwen moved to approve the Helena Elementary Trustee Resolution-Approval of Ballot Language as presented. Board Vice Chair Siobhan Hathhorn seconded the motion.

Public Comment: None.

Vote: 7-0 motion carries unanimously.

b) Helena High School Trustee Resolution-Approval of Ballot Language

Luke Muszkiewicz, Board Chair, commented. I would entertain a motion regarding the Helena High School Trustee Resolution-Approval of Ballot Language.

Motion: Trustee Terry Beaver moved to approve the Helena High School Trustee Resolution-Approval of Ballot Language as presented. Trustee Jennifer McKee seconded the motion.

Public Comment: None.

Vote: 8-0 motion carries unanimously.

2. Consideration for Approval of Resolutions of Intent to Increase Non-voted Levies

Ms. Janelle Mickelson commented. Pursuant to 20-9-116, MCA, trustees of a school district are required to adopt a resolution no later than March 31st and provide notice whenever the trustees intend to impose an increase in a nonvoted levy in the ensuing year to support budgets in the following funds: transportation fund, bus depreciation fund, tuition fund, and adult education fund. The resolution must include at a minimum, the estimated number of increased or decreased mills to be imposed compared to the current fiscal year, the estimated increase or decrease in revenue to be raised compared to the current fiscal year, and the estimated impact on a home valued at \$100,000 and a home valued at \$200,000. A copy of the resolution must be published in a newspaper that will give notice to the largest number of people of the district as

determined by the trustees and must be posted to the school district's website. In addition, pursuant to MCA, 20-9-502, the District must adopt a resolution no later March 31 of each fiscal year identifying the anticipated improvements or projects for which the proceeds of the building reserve levies and associated funding will be used; estimate the total dollar amount of the money to be raised by the levies and associated funding; estimate the associated number of mills to be levied; and provide public notice in a newspaper that will give notice to the largest number of people of the district as determined by the trustees and must be posted to the school district's website. Ms. Mickelson discussed further considerations with the Trustees.

- All estimates are preliminary and expected to change.
- All estimates are based on the current year's taxable values.
- The increase in the transportation levy will be based on the increase in the transportation contract with First Student, an increase in the number of routes, and any increases in salary & benefits. The attached estimate reflects a 3% increase.
- Helena School District does not operate a bus depreciation fund; thus increases/decreases do not apply.
- The increase in the tuition levy represents the estimated increase in payments made to detention facilities and the estimated actual cost of providing services to resident students with special needs in the current year.
- The estimated increase in the adult education fund will be based on any increases in salary and benefits and estimated operating needs for the ensuing year.
- The School Major Maintenance Amount in the building reserve fund is a function of the current year Average Number Belonging (ANB) and taxable value. The School Major Maintenance Amount in the elementary for fiscal year 2022-23 is \$610,650, which is an increase of \$42,450 from the current year, due to an increase in the ANB multiplier. The high school's School Major Maintenance Amount for fiscal year 2022-23 is \$320,140, which is an increase of \$19,040 despite the decrease in ANB, again due to the increase in the multiplier. Assuming the state pays the School Major Maintenance Aid at 100%, which is \$303,845.15 in the elementary and \$167,648.67 in the high school, permissive levies in fiscal year 2022-23 are projected to be \$306,804.85 in the elementary and \$152,491.33 in the high school.
- In addition to the School Major Maintenance Aid and the permissive levies, the elementary levies \$1,250,000 and the high school levies \$750,000. These levies were voted on and approved by the voters for a 10-year period. After the current fiscal year (2021-22), there are two more years remaining on the levy.

Luke Muszkiewicz, Board Chair, commented. I would entertain a motion regarding the Approval of Resolution of Intent to Increase Non-voted Levies-Elementary District.

a) Approval of Resolution of Intent to Increase Non-voted Levies-Elementary District

Motion: Board Vice Chair Siobhan Hathhorn moved to approve the Resolution of Intent to Increase Non-voted Levies-Elementary District as presented. Trustee Terry Beaver seconded the motion.

Public Comment: None.

Vote: 7-0 motion carries unanimously.

Luke Muszkiewicz, Board Chair, commented. I would entertain a motion regarding the Approval of Resolution of Intent to Increase Non-voted Levies-High School District.

b) Approval of Resolution of Intent to Increase Non-voted Levies-High School District

Motion: Trustee Terry Beaver moved to approve the Resolution of Intent to Increase Non-voted Levies-High School District as presented. Trustee Jennifer McKee seconded the motion.

Public Comment: None.

Vote: 8-0 motion carries unanimously.

3. Resolution to Dispose of Personal Property-Facilities Surplus

Robert Brewer, Facilities Manager, commented. The Helena Public Schools purchased plexiglass in response to COVID 19 mitigation strategies in 2020. The plexiglass was installed and served its purpose. In the summer of 2021, the plexiglass was removed and stored in various locations across the district. The District distributed plexiglass to the teachers and staff wanting to use it for instructional purposes. Now we will open this up to the community, then we will open it up to bid for purchase, after that we would give the plexiglass away to the public, and the last resort would be to recycle or dispose of the plexiglass.

Luke Muszkiewicz, Board Chair, commented. I would entertain a motion regarding the Resolution to Dispose of Personal Property-Facilities Surplus.

Motion: Board Vice Chair Siobhan Hathhorn moved to approve the Resolution to Dispose of Personal Property-Facilities Surplus as presented. Trustee Libby Goldes seconded the motion.

Public Comment: None.

Vote: 8-0 motion carries unanimously.

VIII. BOARD COMMENTS

Trustee John McEwen commented. For the trees that Growing Friends have planted, we have paid to pull the irrigation pipe, and the District staff had to hook up from their existing lawn systems to those pipes. Growing Friends has now taken on the cost of a lot of that.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:29 p.m.