



April 8, 2022

Dear Helena Public Schools Families,

I hope you've had a positive and productive first week back after Spring Break. Fourth quarter began on Monday, officially starting the sprint to the end of the school year!

On Tuesday, our high school juniors will head to the Lewis & Clark County Fairgrounds for ACT Testing. The state of Montana has partnered with Gear Up Montana to offer the test for free to all high school juniors. The ACT is used by many colleges as an admission test and is a critical step toward college-preparedness. I encourage our juniors to get good rest this weekend so you can start Monday morning with a mind as sharp as your No. 2 pencil. Good luck!

Meanwhile, for families of our high school seniors, this is an exciting, challenging, and emotional time (I've been there!) as parents and kids prepare for a new life chapter. Traditional graduation ceremonies are planned, and I look forward to sharing details soon.

Wherever your graduate's path may lead – college, military, an apprenticeship, or another grand adventure – I want to share an opportunity to celebrate. Graduating seniors are invited to send short videos highlighting their post-high school plans to [Reach Higher Montana](#), a Helena-based organization dedicated to helping students strategically pursue educational opportunities. Reach Higher will share the videos in its virtual "Senior Send Off" event May 6. In addition to entry in a drawing for scholarships, laptops, and other prizes, participants will have a fun graduation video to share with friends and family. All entries are due by April 22. Find details and examples from last year's graduates, including our very own Capital High '21 grad Wes Bruski, at [Reach Higher Montana Senior Send-Off](#).

April also brings the opportunity to recognize and thank a special group of Helena Public Schools students as we celebrate the Month of the Military Child. Missed birthdays; deployments that take mom or dad away from home for months at a time; and the risk of injury or loss are just some of the realities that our military students navigate as their parents or other loved ones serve our country.

This Tuesday, April 12, Helena High and Capital High invite you to participate in a "Purple Up!" day to recognize the sacrifices military kids make for our country and community – purple because it's the colors of each of our U.S. military branches combined. Please pull out your purple and join us in thanking these brave young heroes!

Also, next week, a Helena School Board Candidate Forum will be held via Zoom on Monday evening from 6:30-8 p.m. The forum is hosted by the League of Women Voters of the Helena Area, YWCA Helena, and Montana Women. All school board candidates on the May 3 ballot have been invited.

[Sign up for the School Board Candidate Forum webinar here](#). The webinar will be recorded and posted on the [Lewis and Clark Library's YouTube channel](#) and the [local LWV website](#).

A reminder that Election Day is May 3. This election is by mail-in ballot, which will be mailed April 18. If you are not registered to vote, late registration is in-person-only through noon, May 2, at the election office, Room 168 of the City-County Building, 316 N. Park Ave, 447-8339.

I encourage you to get to know the candidates and cast your vote for these seats, which are so vital to the future of our kids and community.

Amidst all the activity and excitement that is April, I also want to share a quick reminder to plan ahead for no school on Monday, April 18. This day is traditionally set aside as a snow day, which wasn't necessary this year, giving us a three-day weekend.

These next few weeks are going to fly by fast.

Whether you have a kindergartner, a graduate, or kids in between, I encourage you to pause to reflect on the progress of your student/s so far this school year – academically, socially, and emotionally. You, our district parents, have been our partner in this growth and I am grateful.

Let's fasten our seatbelts and make this exciting, fun, and final quarter of the 2021-22 school year our best yet!

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rex M. Weltz". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the last name.

Rex M. Weltz
Superintendent, Helena Public Schools