



*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 – Special Board Meeting

Monday, August 8th, 2022

Lincoln Campus and via Microsoft Teams

12:00 p.m.

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# MINUTES

## ATTENDEES

*Committee    Others*

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| Siobhan Hathhorn, Chair   | Rex Wetz, Superintendent                      |
| Luke Muszkiewicz, Trustee | Barb Ridgway, Chief of Staff                  |
| Terry Beaver, Trustee     | Joslyn Davidson, Curriculum Director          |
| Janet Armstrong, Trustee  | Brian Cummings, Assistant Superintendent K-5  |
| Jennifer Walsh, Trustee   | Janelle Mickelson, Business Manager           |
| Kay Satre, Trustee        | Jane Shawn, HEA President                     |
| Lois Fitzpatrick, Trustee | Karen Ogden, Communications Officer           |
|                           | Kaitlyn Hess, Assessment and Federal Programs |
|                           | Gary Myers, Director of Technology            |
|                           | Erika McMillin, Social Services Coordinator   |

### I. CALL TO ORDER

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn called the meeting to order at 12:02 p.m.

### II. REVIEW OF AGENDA

The trustees reviewed the agenda, and no changes were made.

### III. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

#### IV. NEW BUSINESS

##### A. Item for Information

##### 1. District Strategic Priorities Discussion

The Board of Trustees and Superintendent Wertz and his team discussed the district's strategic priorities. The goal of the board is to provide enough information for Superintendent Wertz and his team to write the district's strategic priorities along with at least one measurable goal for each strategic priority. At the Board of Trustees Summer Retreat, the board discussed strategic priorities focused on teaching and learning student achievement, communication, and district culture. The focus at this special board meeting was to discuss strategic priorities regarding facilities and budget.

The biggest concern with the budget is when the ESSER funds are depleted, the impact on the general fund will be approximately a 2.5-million-dollar deficit. Superintendent Wertz and the board discussed the idea of developing a one-year fiscal plan, as well as a five-year budget forecast to address the budget shortfalls. Janet Armstrong, Trustee and chair of the Budget and Finance Committee, suggested that the Budget and Finance Committee begin by discussing the budget, goals for the budget, and look at expenses versus income, and create ideas on how we can reduce expenses and increase income. The Budget and Finance Committee will also need to discuss what levies, including bond levies, will need to be run, and the process required to do that. The trustees discussed that it may be beneficial for the budget goal to be a specific number that could be focused upon, such as the 2.5-million-dollar deficit. The trustees and Superintendent Wertz discussed enrollment numbers and the fact that the district is not seeing an increase in elementary numbers like it did in the past. Many families are moving east of Helena to newer, more affordable subdivisions and attending East Helena schools.

To summarize, the Board of Trustees and Superintendent Wertz discussed the HSD district priority for fiscal responsibility would include developing a one-year fiscal plan that includes the goal of reducing the 2.5-million-dollar deficit as well as a five-year budget forecast that includes both revenue and decreased expenses.

The Board of Trustees and Superintendent Wertz moved on to discuss facilities and safety and security in the district. One of the goals for facilities has been to publish a new and revised district facilities master plan. The facilities master plan will be a critical tool in helping the board and the district make decisions for levies and upcoming deferred maintenance projects. SMA Architects were selected to create the district facilities master plan, and they are on track with the project. When SMA Architects complete the facilities master plan document, they will present it to the board and receive board input before they produce a final deliverable. There will also be opportunities for members in the community to understand where we are going with the facilities master plan, and then to provide feedback. The board discussed the goal of updating the district's

safety and security plan, and Superintendent Weltz and his team have already begun this process. The board mentioned it would be beneficial to review in the policy committee the applicable district policy regarding our safety and security plan to ensure that it is adequate and being reviewed by administrators and the board on a regular basis. Superintendent Weltz discussed that a company called Secure Education Consultants will be performing safety audits at various school districts across Montana, including here in the Helena School District. After looking at all aspects of safety in the district, they will put together data informing the district of what we do well, and where we need to grow. The third potential goal is the renewal of our ten-year voted building reserve levy. This levy is critical to the ongoing maintenance of our facilities, and if it were to expire it would be a huge hit to the general fund and would put ongoing maintenance projects at a standstill. The board discussed the potential of putting that levy before the voters this spring.

**V. BOARD COMMENTS**

There were no further comments.

**VI. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:59 p.m.