



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

Tuesday, March 21st, 2023 | 11:00 a.m. | C.R. Anderson Middle School and via TEAMS

MINUTES

ATTENDEES

<i>Trustees</i>	<i>Others</i>
Siobhan Hathhorn, Board Chair	Rex Weltz, Superintendent
Jennifer McKee, Vice Chair	Josh McKay, Assistant Superintendent 6-12
Luke Muszkiewicz, Trustee	Barb Ridgway, Chief of Staff
Terry Beaver, Trustee	Janelle Mickelson, Business Manager
Kay Satre, Trustee	Lona Carter, School Health Grant Facilitator
Janet Armstrong, Trustee	Brian Cummings, Assistant Superintendent K-5
Jennifer Walsh, Trustee	Gary Myers, Director of Educational Technology
	Keri Mizell, Human Resources Director
	Karen Ogden, Communications Officer
	Candice Delvaux, Executive Assistant
	Jane Shawn, HEA President
	Todd Verrill, Facilities Director
	Tim McMahon, Activities Director
	Kathleen Prody, C.R. Anderson Middle School Principal
	Sherri Martin, Administrative Secretary
	Sarah Graham, Guest of the Public
	Eric Peterson, C.R. Anderson Middle School Assistant Principal
	Sol Jones, C.R. Anderson Middle School Assistant Principal

I. **CALL TO ORDER/ PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn called the meeting to order at 12:03 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. REVIEW OF AGENDA

Board Chair Siobhan Hathorn reviewed the agenda with the Board of Trustees and there were no changes.

The Board of Trustees moved on to General Public Comment.

III. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no general public comment offered.

IV. PRESENTATION

Ms. Kathleen Prody, C.R. Anderson Middle School Principal, gave a presentation to the Board of Trustees. Principal Prody shared C.R. Anderson's mission statement. *"Our mission is to provide a positive environment where staff, parents, and the community work together to prepare students to be lifelong learners and contributing members of society."*

Principal Prody shared the staff demographics of C.R. Anderson Middle School.

- 36 Core Teachers (English, Math, Science, and Social Studies)
- 3.4 Music Teachers (Band, Orchestra, Choir)
- 4.8 Health Enhancement Teachers
- 5 Rotations Teachers (Health, Art, Computer Applications)
- 1 Industrial Arts & Teacher
- 1 Art & Teacher
- 1 Instructional Coach
- 7 Special Education Teachers
- 1 Speech Pathologist
- 1 School Psychologist (shared with HMS)
- 3 Counselors
- 2 Librarians
- 3 General Education Paraprofessionals
- 5 Special Education Paras
- 3 Administrators
- Custodians
- Kitchen

There are three Distinguished Educators for 2022-2023 at C.R. Anderson. They are Kelly Elder, Leslie Hagenruber, and Nancy Peterson.

Principal Prody reviewed student demographics at C.R. Anderson. Each grade level has three student teams. 8th grade is comprised of 356 students total that are either on the 406 team, the Big Sky team, or the Vigilante team. 7th grade is comprised of 335 students total that are either on the Wildside team, the Meadowlark team, or the Elkhorn team. 6th grade is comprised of 367 students total that are either on the Sapphire team, the Gold team, or the Platinum team. There are 1,058 total students at C.R. Anderson Middle School. Students in grades 6,7 & 8 all take the core curriculum comprised of: English, Math, Science, and Social Studies. In addition, 6th grade students take Health Enhancement and Music, Computer Applications, and Art and Health. 7th grade students take Health Enhancement and Music, and Health and Life skills. 8th grade students take Health Enhancement and Music, Industrial Arts, Art, and Spanish. Principal Prody shared the field trips that occur at C.R. Anderson, the many clubs that students can join, and discussed the Music program. The Music program includes band, concert band, jazz band, orchestra, chamber orchestra, and choir.

Principal Prody discussed student life at C.R. Anderson. At C.R. Anderson STAR students are selected each quarter, with two students from each advisory. The qualifications are: Work Ethic, Leadership, Resilience, and Kindness. This year there was a family fun night in which families and students played “Are You Smarter Than A 6th Grader?” and the staff provided refreshments for students and families. This year there were almost 80 Sapphire Team students and families that played Kahoot together. Students participated in Starbase this year and students and community STEM mentors worked on prototypes of board games they developed. All game pieces were designed with basic CAD and 3D printed. At C.R. Anderson students participate in Transitions, 8th Grade Transition, and WEB Day for 6th graders.

Principal Prody concluded her presentation by discussing community outreach at C.R. Anderson. Bookmarks for Kindness were made by the Sapphire Team and donated to community children through the Lewis and Clark Library. Students gathered signatures to promote inclusion in the “Choose to Include” project and the School Wide Food Drive was a great success. The Hot Chocolate for Cancer group, organized by Mrs. Richards class with many other classrooms taking part, raised \$2,000 towards the purchase of Keurigs and KCups for chemo patients so they have their own coffee, tea, hot chocolate, and hot cider bar while receiving their treatment.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Consent Action Items

1. 01.24.23 Board Work Session Meeting Minutes
2. 02.28.23 Board Work Session Meeting Minutes

Siobhan Hathhorn, Board Chair, commented. "I would entertain a motion for the Consent Action Items as presented."

Motion: Trustee Luke Muszkiewicz moved to approve the Consent Action Items as presented. Trustee Jennifer McKee seconded the motion.

Public Comment: None.

Vote: 7-0 motion carries unanimously.

B. Items For Action

1. Consideration of Ballot Language for General Fund Levy Proposition
 - a. Helena Elementary Trustee Resolution-Approval of Ballot Language

Siobhan Hathhorn, Board Chair, commented. "I would entertain a motion for the Consideration of Ballot Language for the General Fund Levy Proposition for the Helena Elementary Trustee Resolution-Approval of Ballot Language."

Motion: Trustee Luke Muszkiewicz moved to approve the Consideration of Ballot Language for the General Fund Levy Proposition for the Helena Elementary Trustee Resolution-Approval of Ballot Language with recommended revisions.

Trustee Muszkiewicz recommended the following six revisions. The first recommendation is to add the letter *s* to the word Trustee on the third line in the first paragraph. The second recommendation is to add a comma after the word *year* on line three in the second paragraph. The third recommendation is to remove the colon after the word *of* on the third line in the second paragraph, and instead of the colon add the word *supporting*. The fifth recommendation is to add the language */annually* after \$3.96 on the second line in the third paragraph. The sixth and final recommendation is to add the language */annually* after \$7.91 on the second line in the third paragraph.

Trustee Muszkiewicz stated that we always say what the impact is on a home valued at \$100,000 and \$200,000 and we have said many times that is the taxable value and not necessarily the value you could sell your house for. Trustee Muszkiewicz stated that the usage of the term market value in the ballot language is confusing because it almost suggests that it would be the value you could sell your house for. Janelle Mickelson, District Clerk and Business Manager, clarified that the term market value is traditionally what we have used in the past and is what OPI recommends, therefore, Ms. Mickelson is recommending that we do not change the term market value. Trustee Muszkiewicz wants to make sure that everyone understands that although the term states market value, it really means taxable value.

Ms. Mickelson stated that if you look at your tax statement it has market value listed, and that is why OPI is recommending that term. It is not the amount you could sell your house for; it is the assessed taxable value which they call market value.

Trustee Kay Satre seconded the motion with the recommended revisions.

Public Comment: None.

Vote: 6-0 motion carries unanimously.

2. Consideration of Ballot Language for Building Reserve Levy Propositions
 - a. Helena Elementary Trustee Resolution-Approval of Ballot Language

Siobhan Hathhorn, Board Chair, commented. "I would entertain a motion for the Consideration of Ballot Language for Building Reserve Levy Propositions for the Helena Elementary Trustee Resolution-Approval of Ballot Language."

Motion: Trustee Luke Muszkiewicz moved to approve the Consideration of Ballot Language for Building Reserve Levy Propositions for the Helena Elementary Trustee Resolution-Approval of Ballot Language with recommended revisions.

Trustee Muszkiewicz recommended the following four revisions. The first recommendation is to add the letter *s* to the word Trustee on the third line in the first paragraph. The second recommendation is to add the language *over ten years* after the word total on line three of the second paragraph. The third recommendation is to add the language */annually* after \$19.26 on the second line in the third paragraph. The fourth and final recommendation is to add the language */annually* after \$38.53 on the third line in the third paragraph.

Trustee Terry Beaver asked if after five years we find this amount is not satisfactory, would it restrict us to use the language *over ten years* in the ballot language. Ms. Mickelson stated that it would not restrict us to use the language *over ten years*, and the language is recommended by OPI. If this passes then we have the ability to do this for ten years, but if we decide it is not enough money and we want to come back out to the voters for a new levy, we have the ability to do that.

Trustee Jennifer McKee seconded the motion with the recommended revisions.

Public Comment: None.

Vote: 6-0 motion carries unanimously.

2. Consideration of Ballot Language for Building Reserve Levy Propositions
a. Helena High School Trustee Resolution-Approval of Ballot Language

Siobhan Hathorn, Board Chair, commented. "I would entertain a motion for the Consideration of Ballot Language for Building Reserve Levy Propositions for the Helena High School Trustee Resolution-Approval of Ballot Language."

Motion: Trustee Luke Muszkiewicz moved to approve the Consideration of Ballot Language for Building Reserve Levy Propositions for the Helena High School Trustee Resolution-Approval of Ballot Language with recommended revisions.

Trustee Muszkiewicz recommended the following two revisions. The first recommendation is to add the letter *s* to the word Trustee on the third line in the first paragraph. The second recommendation is to add the language *over ten years* after the word *total* on line three of the second paragraph.

Trustee Terry Beaver seconded the motion with the recommended revisions.

Public Comment: None.

Vote: 7-0 motion carries unanimously.

VI. BOARD DISCUSSION

The Board of Trustees moved on to Board Discussion and asked Superintendent Rex Weltz to give them an update on the budget. Superintendent Weltz discussed that we are working to reduce our deficit of roughly 4.5 million dollars in the elementary and nearly 2 million dollars in the high school. We need to be able to make some adjustments right now because our interlocal savings account cannot sustain a full year without making some reductions. This is going to be a two-year process. This first year we must make reductions across the district, utilize retirements and resignations, and find ways to run our facilities more efficiently. To begin addressing the budget deficit non-tenure employees have received non-renewal communication with the understanding there is a possibility they may be brought back once we look at staffing numbers. Principals in the District will meet with the majority of non-tenured employees to let them know their status before spring break. They will be notified if they will be recommended to the Board for non-renewal or if they will return for the 2023-2024 school year.

Superintendent Weltz discussed that he and his administrative team have met with the staff of Ray Bjork Learning Center in person to inform them that the Ray Bjork facility will be closed. The programs and services are not going away, they will stay in place but will be relocated into available spaces throughout the district. Superintendent Weltz stated that once we have the final Facilities Master Plan document, we can determine what the recommendation is for the Ray Bjork building, as well as other important recommendations across the district.

Superintendent Wertz stated he will be conducting Staff Forums to discuss the budget before spring break on Tuesday, March 21st from 4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., Wednesday, March 22nd from 4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., and Thursday, March 23rd from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. Additionally, a staff and community email will go out the Friday before spring break with information regarding the ongoing process to address the budget deficit.

Superintendent Wertz stated that he wants people to have the opportunity to provide input and voice their opinion on how to address the budget deficit, therefore, there will be a Budget Consensus Recommendation Committee formed. The Budget Consensus Recommendation Committee will begin their work in May and will be led by at least two facilitators. Superintendent Wertz has asked Dr. Rob Watson, Executive Director of the School Administrators of Montana, to facilitate. The co-facilitator will be Educator Melissa Romano. The committee will have around thirty members including three Trustees, parents, administrators, teachers, union representatives, and others yet to be determined. The committee will be charged with preparing recommendations for the 2024/2025 school year that will ultimately come to the Board of Trustees for approval. The Board will have a monthly update from the Budget Consensus Recommendation Committee.

Mr. Josh McKay, Assistant Superintendent 6-12, and Mr. Brian Cummings, Assistant Superintendent K-5, shared with the Trustees that they are meeting with Principals to strategize how we will utilize retirements and if those positions will need to be filled, they are discussing class sizes and the possibility of having combination classes, and reviewing how we can be more efficient with positions across our district. We will continue to make staffing adjustments right up until the start of the 2023/2024 school year to make sure we are running our buildings as efficiently as possible.

VII. UPCOMING MEETINGS

Siobhan Hathhorn, Board Chair, reviewed upcoming meetings with the Board of Trustees.

- Tuesday, April 4th, 12:00 p.m., Policy Committee Meeting
- Wednesday, April 5th, 12:00 p.m., Teaching and Learning Committee Meeting
- Friday, April 7th, 12:00 p.m., Facilities and Maintenance Committee Meeting
- Tuesday, April 11th, 11:00 a.m., Executive Committee Meeting
- Tuesday, April 11th, 12:00 p.m., Budget and Finance Committee Meeting
- Tuesday, April 11th, 5:30 p.m., Full Board Meeting

VIII. BOARD COMMENTS

There were no additional board comments.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn adjourned the meeting at 1:49 p.m.

Candice Delvaux, Recording Secretary