



Superintendent

Rex Wertz
324-2001

Business Manager

Janelle Mickelson
324-2040

Board of Trustees Meeting

Lincoln Center
1325 Poplar St., Helena, MT 59601
And on TEAMS

Tuesday, May 9th, 2023
5:30 p.m.

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE – Present unless otherwise noted.

Siobhan Hathhorn, Chair
Jennifer McKee, Vice Chair
Luke Muszkiewicz, Trustee
Kay Satre, Trustee
Terry Beaver, Trustee
Jennifer Walsh, Trustee
Janet Armstrong, Trustee

Keiran Boyle, Capital High School Student Representative for the Board of Trustees
Loreley Drees, Helena High School Student Representative for the Board of Trustees

Rex Wertz, Superintendent
Keri Mizell, Human Resources Director
Josh McKay, Assistant Superintendent
Brian Cummings, Assistant Superintendent
Janelle Mickelson, Business Manager
Barb Ridgway, Chief of Staff
Gary Myers, Director of Educational Technology
Jane Shawn, HEA President
Todd Verrill, Facilities Director
Brett Zanto, Capital High Principal
Steve Thennis, Helena High Principal
Karen Ogden, Communications Officer
Lona Carter, School Health Grant Facilitator
Tim McMahon, Activities Director
Many guests of the public as well as Helena School District staff

I. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. REVIEW AGENDA

The Board of Trustees reviewed the agenda. The Student Representatives need to leave early for other events, so the Trustees determined that the Student Representatives would give their reports after Superintendent Weltz gives his Superintendent Report.

III. RECOGNITIONS

A. HOSA Future Health Professional State Conference Winners

The Board of Trustees recognized the following Capital High students who were 1st Place Gold Medal winners at the HOSA Future Health Professional State Conference:

- Charlie Snellman in Medical Spelling, Microbiology
- RaeAnn Lowen in Nursing Assisting
- Keiran Boyle in Surgical Technician
- Karter Arensmeyer in Pharmacology and Heredity
- (Team event) Adam Grasmick, Rebecca Thomas, and Ellie Mercer in Creative Problem Solving

Special thanks to HOSA advisors Tanner Duncan and Kendra Kurokawa for everything they do to support students.

B. Helena Education Foundation Harrison Writing Awards

The Board of Trustees recognized the following Helena Education Foundation Harrison Writing Award winners:

- "Engine and Annie" - Cecilia Kolar HHS
- "People Watching" - Alli Christensen HHS
- "Love in a Live Oak" - Robert Stimpson HHS
- "Dancing in the Moonlight"- Wyatt Gant HHS

Special thanks to Lisa Cordingley, Executive Director of the Helena Education Foundation, and Jason Loble, HEF Board member and Chair of the Harrison Committee, for all that they do to support these amazing writers.

C. Stake SkillsUSA Leadership Winner

The Board of Trustees recognized Capital High student Evan Wright who won Gold in Pin Design at the State SkillsUSA Leadership Conference. Special thanks to Eric Croft who helped host the State SkillsUSA Leadership Conference that was held at Capital High School and Helena College.

D. Great Northern Dance Competition

The Board of Trustees recognized the HHS Dance Team as they captured 1st place in the Great Northern Dance Competition. Thanks to Coach Lexsey Carpenter for all that she does to encourage and support students. Congratulations to the following 1st Place Champions:

- Meleya Anderson
- Rebecca Gruber
- Eve Monforte
- Grace Rainey
- Natalie Zimmerman

E. Montana Coaches Association Hall of Fame

The Board of Trustees recognized Capital High School Boys Track Coach Lon Carter who has been selected to join the Montana Coaches Association Hall of Fame in July.

F. Alma Smith Jacobs Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Award

The Board of Trustees recognized Broadwater Elementary Librarian Marla Unruh, who has received the new Alma Smith Jacobs Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Award from the Montana Library Association. The award is named for the groundbreaking Great Falls librarian who, in 1973, became the first woman and the first African American to serve as Montana's State Librarian.

IV. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Rex Weltz gave his report to the Board of Trustees. The information presented included:

- Recognition
 - o Community – Levy Support
 - o The 99th Annual Vigilante Day Parade
 - o School Principal’s Day May 1st, 2023
 - o Teacher Appreciation Week May 1st- May 5th, 2023
 - o School Lunch Hero Day May 5th, 2023
 - o School Nurse Day May 10th, 2023
 - o National Speech Pathologist Day May 18th, 2023
 - o May is Mental Health Awareness Month
 - o Handle With Care-City of Helena
 - o Congratulations to Helena High Senior Foster Smith who was selected as the March IR Student of the Month.
 - o Thank you to the Rotary Club of Helena for generously donating rain boots to Helena Public School students in need.
 - o Thank you to HEF Executive Director Lisa Cordingley and Becca Leaphart for all their efforts that went into hosting the 2023 Celebration of Excellence and Pen and Ink
 - o Thank you to the Rotary Club of Helena Sunrise who is a contributing sponsor of the Helena Education Foundation’s Fabulous Firsts program, which provides a new, hardcover book to every first-grader in the district every year
 - o In April more than 1,600 fourth and fifth graders visited the Helena Civic Center to hear the work of American composer George Gershwin thanks to the generosity of Helena Symphony musicians and their supporters.
 - o In April the Myrna Loy treated more than 2,000 kindergarten through second grade students to Carroll College Theatre’s production of Charlotte’s Web by American novelist E.B. White.
 - o The City of Helena invited fourth and fifth graders from Central Elementary to plant trees in the burn scar from the 2022 Mount Helena fire. The event paid homage to a similar tree planting that occurred on Arbor Day in 1899.

- New Business
 - o HEA / HSD Negotiations
 - o Graduation Planning – 2023
 - o Budget Update – May 2023

Superintendent Rex Weltz shared some of the work that has been completed thus far to address the over six-million-dollar budget shortfall in the elementary general fund and high school general fund. In January 2023, Superintendent Weltz initiated weekly leadership meetings to address the general fund shortfalls. Between January and May of 2023, we have initiated reduction strategies including utilizing retirement savings, building budget reductions, initiating a non-renewal process, central office department budget reductions, relocation of programs into existing spaces across the district, and administrative reductions. With these efforts we reduced the shortfall by nearly \$2.7 million dollars in the elementary general fund and around \$646,000 dollars in the high school general fund. We are

still short around \$3.3 million dollars combined in the elementary and high school general fund; therefore, we will be forming a budget consensus recommendation committee comprised of community members, Helena Public Schools staff members, and Trustees that will come around the table to brainstorm how we can reduce the shortfall of over \$3,000,000 dollars. Superintendent Weltz emphasized that these numbers are fluid and may change as we gather new information. Superintendent Weltz shared that Assistant Superintendent Pre-K-5, Brian Cummings, would be retiring at the end of this school year. Superintendent Weltz has made the decision that he will not replace that position until we are in a better position with our budget.

Trustee Janet Armstrong commented that she looks forward to when we can reinstate the Assistant Superintendent Pre-K-5 position because she feels having that position has really benefited the district and the students because Assistant Superintendent 6-12 Josh McKay was able to focus on more things that he wasn't able to when he was charged with Pre-K-12.

- o Facilities Master Plan
 - o The facilities planning process continues as we develop a roadmap to guide the ongoing maintenance and development of school facilities for the next 5, 10 and 20 years. The Master Facilities Plan Key Stakeholders Group gathered for its third meeting on Wednesday, April 26th.
- o Helena Public Schools Retirement Celebration
 - o May 24th, 4:30 p.m. Central Elementary School
- Outreach/Meetings
 - o Hometown Helena
 - o Chamber of Commerce
 - o Cabinet & Leadership
 - o Board Leadership
 - o HEF Executive Committee
 - o Teacher Advisory Meeting
 - o Parent Advisory Committee
 - o AA Superintendents
 - o HEF
 - o Executive Meeting
 - o Board Meeting
 - o HEA President/Superintendent Meeting
 - o Rotary Club
 - o Interview With Montana Radio Company
 - o Media Facilities Tour
 - o SMA
 - o “Soap Box”

That concluded the Superintendent's Report portion of the agenda. The Trustees moved on to hear the Student Representative Reports.

Student Representative Reports

1. Ms. Loreley Drees, Helena High School Student Representative for the Board of Trustees, gave her report. Ms. Drees stated that it is Teacher Appreciation Week, and she would like to thank all the teachers and other employees for all that they do. Helena High School had their NHS induction ceremony last month and Ms. Drees congratulated the students that were inducted at the ceremony. Ms. Drees mentioned that spring sports at Helena High School are going well, and the HHS Business Professionals of America members did very well at the national tournament. Ms. Drees shared that the Vigilante Parade was a success, and congratulated Mr. Keiran Boyle on his winning float. Ms. Drees shared that it is Mental Health Awareness month and Asian American Pacific Islander month. Ms. Drees stated that Helena Middle School and Helena High School have done a tremendous job in providing mental health support for students. Ms. Drees concluded her student representative report by thanking the Board of Trustees for giving her the chance to be a student representative for the board.
2. Mr. Keiran Boyle, Capital High School Student Representative for the Board of Trustees, gave his report. Mr. Boyle thanked the community for passing all three levies. Mr. Boyle shared that last Monday, their School Leadership Team met for half a day with Debbie Hunsaker, our district literacy consultant. During the meeting they discussed instructional rounds data from the 38 full period rounds that were conducted during the last week of April. The School Leadership Team is using this data to create schoolwide goals for next year. They are discussing the strategies themselves, which strategies to focus on, and when to focus on them. All 9th and 10th grade students will be participating in the spring iReady assessment next week. The annual Senior Grad Walk will occur in the westside feeding elementary schools next Wednesday, May 17th. There were almost 90 floats in the Vigilante Parade. Mr. Baty and Mr. Harris recently took the Modern Band students on a tour of all elementary schools in our district and the performances were well received. Some CHS staff recently were trained in Stop the Bleed. Mr. Boyle thanked CHS SRO Jon Pulsifer for being the trainer and thanked CHS nurse Shannon McNamee for coordinating this opportunity. Now that a few teachers and Mr. Boyle are trained, HOSA can proceed with purchasing Stop the Bleed kits, and they can now be placed in the building. Mr. Boyle concluded his report by expressing his appreciation to the Board of Trustees for giving him the opportunity to be a student representative for the board.

The Board of Trustees and Superintendent Weltz expressed their appreciation to Ms. Drees and Mr. Boyle for serving as student representatives on the Board of Trustees and moved on to general public comment.

V. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no general public comment and the Board of Trustees moved on to discuss New Business-Items for Information.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Items For Information

1. School Health Administrator Update

Ms. Lona Carter, School Health Grant Facilitator, gave a School Health Administrator Update to the Board of Trustees. Ms. Carter began by discussing goals that the Helena Public Schools has regarding mental health. The first goal is to, *“Formalize sustainable community partnerships with the Helena Schools and community health care providers, creating a menu of on-campus, community, and/or virtual supports for youth in need.”* Barriers to care will be removed as services will be delivered at school sites. The second goal is, *“Implement and sustain a continuum of best-practice trauma-informed trainings.”* The third goal is, *“Provide real-time behavioral health interventions.”*

Ms. Carter reviewed demographics of the Helena Public Schools. Currently we have 7,676 students. We have two traditional high schools, two alternative programs, two middle schools, and eleven elementary schools.

- Schools that qualify for schoolwide title services are: Broadwater, Bryant, Central, HHS, HMS, Rossiter, Smith, and Warren.
- Schools that are just under the poverty threshold for Title:Kessler.
- Ethnicity: Caucasian 86.8%, American Indian 6.4%, Asian .8%, Black or African-American .6%, Hispanic/Latino .5%. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander .1%, Other or Not identified 4.8%.
- ELL: 42 students;
 - Mexican/Spanish 30, Turkish 1, Blackfeet 1, Russian 2, Mandarin 3, Dari/Pashto 3, Thai 1, Nigerian 1
- Special Education Identified: 18.8%
- 504 identified: 11%
- Elevated post pandemic drop-out rate
- 1728 students qualified for free meals
- 261 students qualified for reduced price meals
- Schools vary from 12.5% - 59% eligibility
- 1 in 4 (25.39%) of our students is surviving poverty

Ms. Carter moved on to discuss the Behavioral and Emotional Risk Index (BASC-BESS). The Behavioral and Emotional Risk Index (BASC-BESS) was administered districtwide in October 2022. The results were sobering. Ten percent (156 students) of our K-2 students were identified as having an “Extremely Elevated Risk” of behavioral and emotional risk, with an additional 15% (235 students) identified as having an “Elevated Risk” for a total of 391 district K-2nd graders. Completing the survey themselves, 9% (445 students) of 3rd through 12th grade students rated themselves as being in the “Extremely Elevated Risk” of behavioral and emotional risk, with an additional 17% (854 students) rating themselves as having an “Elevated Risk” for a total of 1,299 district 3rd –12th graders. Our internal screening tools indicate that approximately one in four youth have an elevated risk for anxiety and/or depression.

In the spring of 2023, 6-12th graders shifted to the Rural Behavioral Health Initiative (RBHI) Mental Health Screenings Link to Care. The middle schools spring 2023 RBHI data showed that: 14-18% of students reported previous or current suicidality, 9 -12% of students reported clinically significant depressive symptoms, and 9 – 12% of students reported clinically significant anxiety symptoms. The alternative programs spring 2023 RBHI data showed that: 56% of students reported previous or current suicidality, 20% of students reported clinically significant depressive symptoms, 12% of students reported clinically significant anxiety symptoms. The high schools spring 2023 RBHI data showed that: 14-18% of students reported previous or current suicidality, 8-9% of students reported clinically significant depressive symptoms, and 7 – 9% of students reported clinically significant anxiety symptoms.

Ms. Carter moved on to discuss how we have supported our student’s behavior and physical health needs in the Helena Public Schools, and reviewed the resiliency programs currently in our schools.

- CONSCIOUS DISCIPLINE: Kindergarten –12th grades; Conscious Discipline is based on brain research and is a social emotional learning program that emphasizes adults modeling behavior and problem-solving during student behavioral episodes that teaches the student skills that assist in self-control and self-regulation.
- BASC-BESS (Behavioral & Emotional Screening System): Kindergarten – 5th grades; given in October and February.
- Second Step Lessons: Kindergarten –5th grades. The skills with Second Step are focused on empathy, emotion management, friendship and problem solving.
- PAX GBG (PeaceBuilders Good Behavior Game): Kindergarten – 5th grades. The PAX GBG is an evidence-based, best practice, universal preventative intervention applied by the teacher in the classroom. Students learn self-management (self-regulation) skills while collaborating to make their classroom a peaceful and productive learning environment. The PAX GBG was not designed to be a suicide prevention program, but studies have shown students who learned the PAX GBG are significantly less likely to have experienced suicidal ideation.
- SOS (Signs of Suicide): Middle School and Junior year program, presented by counselors. SOS is specifically designed to teach students how to recognize the signs of suicide and mental health struggles in themselves or peers and to encourage students to reach out for help. Students learned ACT (Acknowledge, Care, Tell).
- YAMH (Youth Aware of Mental Health): Freshman year program run through the Frosh PE courses. Five lessons are presented by outside mental health professionals.
- QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) – Sophomore program run through the Health classes by health teachers. The focus of this program is for students to learn how to engage with a classmate who may be having suicidal thoughts and to understand the importance of asking for help from an adult if they feel their friend is at risk.

Ms. Carter reviewed achievements for 2022-2023. The Montana Healthcare Foundation Planning Grant has provided: critical guidance and expertise, site visits and training, and grant writing help. Three school-based health clinics will open in 2023-2024: Helena Indian Alliance (HHS & CRA), and PureView (PAL). Ms. Carter shared what is happening district-wide:

- Suicide Risk Assessment and Threat Assessment training
- Safer Montana Tipline
- Handle With Care
- Deterra and Gunlocks

- Partnership with Carrol College’s new LCSW program (MOU signed, launching 2023-2024)
- School Site Transition Centers (implementing at 9-12)
- RBHI Screening scheduled through 24-25. Planning stages for an HSD/RBHI pilot program which could become State/National Model

Ms. Carter reviewed the Anticipated Professional Development:

- Trauma Informed Practices
- Youth Mental Health First Aid
- Suicide Risk Assessment
- Suicide Safe Care Tools

Ms. Carter discussed:

- SEL calendar for district coordination of staff trainings, trainings for students, and assessments /survey dates (2023-2024)
- District webpage dedicated to mental health resources for staff, students and families (2023-2024)
- Redefine, with partner support, District Crisis Response Protocol (2023-2024)
- Include School Based Health Clinics in plans for future school sites

Ms. Carter shared a list of Community Connections:

- Safer Communities Montana Leadership Team
- Lewis & Clark Suicide Prevention Coalition
- Lewis & Clark Behavioral Health Local Advisory Council
- Lewis & Clark Opioid Prevention Taskforce
- Communities That Care Coalition Board Member

Ms. Carter reviewed grants that the Helena Public Schools have applied for including:

- Helena Public School District AWARE Project (SAMHSA)
 - 5-year grant; up to 1.8M per year
- NPC Research support via MHF
 - Supported by OPI and DPHHS
 - MH Team of 12
 - Link to Care
 - Staff training
- Helena School District Mental Health Awareness Training Project (SAMHSA)
 - 3-year grant; up to 200K per year
 - NPC Research support via MHF
 - Supported by HPD, Sheriff, L&CCH
 - Community, Parent, Agency, Employee training
- Helena Public School District Title IV-A Stronger Connections Grant (OPI)
 - 2-year grant; up to 175K per year
 - MTSS-B
 - Dr. Bella Bikowski, consultant
 - evaluate current model
 - work with District and Building Teams

- strengthen current practices
- ensure students' academic and behavioral health needs are met
- fiscal responsibility

Ms. Carter concluded her presentation by sharing some of the needs of the Helena Public Schools regarding mental health:

- SBHC at HMS and CHS
- Mental health practitioners serving students in need at all 16 school sites
- Case manager(s) to coordinate services for students and provide technical support for families
- School Based Behaviorists to support students in general education settings
- Transportation (uber-type service) for student health appointments not available in school settings
- District-wide trauma-informed trainings for teachers and staff
- Family outreach with learning opportunities to strengthen family systems
- Mental and Physical Health Student Advisory Board
- Partner/District Advisory Board

The Board of Trustees moved on to review Policy 2120: Wellness.

2. Policy 2120: Wellness

Chief of Staff, Barb Ridgway, presented Policy 2120: Wellness to the Board of Trustees. The District Wellness Committee reviewed this existing policy and have suggested modifications that emphasize nutritious foods, address the diversity of the student body in meal planning, provide safe, clean, pleasant settings, and adequate time to eat. Additionally, the committee wants to encourage the promotion of healthy foods at celebrations.

The Board of Trustees moved on to review Policy 7080: District School, Student, Group Fundraising.

3. Policy 7080: District School, Student, Group Fundraising

Chief of Staff, Barb Ridgway, presented Policy 7080: District School, Student, Group Fundraising to the Board of Trustees. The primary reason for modifying this existing policy is to provide more clarity regarding online fundraising. It also establishes the need to identify the impact on facilities, technology, and curriculum before the fundraising is initiated. Ms. Ridgway pointed out new language on lines 32 through 39 which states, *“Only district related/approved groups are permitted to operate under this policy and non-district groups may not use the district’s name, network, or infrastructure to conduct fundraising. As public employees, staff members are subject to Montana public employees’ ethics laws. Staff members may not solicit or accept material, cash, or equipment intended for personal use from individuals or through a*

crowd source effort that could be considered a gift of substantial value or that otherwise violates the ethics statutes.”

Ms. Ridgway pointed out new language on lines 64 through 72 which states, *“The extent of student involvement. The impact of the requested resource on facilities, technology, and curriculum/instruction. A file is to be maintained at the school or department for any fundraising request. This file should include: the principal’s/administrator’s fundraising approval form, the written detail of the projects as well as what is posted on any online platform/website, any photos or images posted with the project and a copy of all agreements and permission forms.”*

Ms. Ridgway concluded by reviewing language regarding crowdfunding on lines 79 through 96 which states, *“If a crowdfunding proposal is approved:*

- *The individual who initiated the crowdfunding effort shall immediately notify the Superintendent or designee when the request has been posted and how long it will remain active online.*
- *For any funds raised on a crowdfunding site a check should be requested to be mailed to the school in the name of the school, not to an individual person.*
- *All gifts, grants, bequests, and contributions must be officially accepted in accordance with Policy 7005 (Revenue and Investments).*
- *All non-monetary items (supplies, equipment, etc.) obtained are the property of the Helena School District and all inventory procedures apply, and, if applicable, will remain in the school where the proposal originator was located at time of the grant award unless a move to another site is approved by the principal or supervisor.*
- *All monetary donations should be recorded by the business manager/clerk in the Schools Funds accounting system at each school.”*

That concluded the Items for Information. The Board of Trustees moved on to review the Consent Action Items.

B. Consent Action Items

1. Warrants
2. Out-Of-District Attendance Agreements (Non-Resident Students Attending HPS)
3. Out-Of-District Attendance Agreements (Helena Students Attending Other Districts)
4. 04.11.23 Full Board Meeting Minutes
5. 04.26.23 FMP Key Stakeholder Meeting Minutes
6. 05.02.23 Special Board Meeting Minutes

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn commented. *“At this point I would entertain a motion to approve our Consent Action Items.”*

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

Public Comment: None.

Vote: 6-0 motion carries unanimously.

That concluded the Consent Action Items. The Board of Trustees moved on to review the Items for Action.

C. Items for Action

1. Approval of Resolution Requesting County to Conduct 2024 Elections

Mrs. Janelle Mickelson, Business Manager, presented the Approval of Resolution Requesting County to Conduct 2024 Elections to the Board of Trustees.

Background:

Pursuant to 20-20-417, MCA, the trustees of a district may request the county election administrator to conduct certain school elections during the ensuing school fiscal year. The request must be made by a resolution of the board of trustees. Whenever the county election administrator agrees to conduct a school election, the administrator shall perform the duties imposed on the trustees and the clerk of the district for school elections and deliver to the trustees, for the purpose of canvassing the vote, the certified tally sheets and other election items needed for canvassing the vote.

Considerations:

- The county election administrator has agreed to run elections scheduled for the regular election day, May 7, 2024.
- If a special election is requested, the county election administrator would want to find an agreeable date for the election and may refuse to run elections on a date that does not work for election office.
- The District must provide copies of all candidate filing forms and any ballot issue language by the candidate filing deadline.
- The county election office will run the election by district, not by precinct. Requests to run the election by precinct will not be accommodated.

Superintendent recommendation:

Approve the resolution requesting the county to conduct 2024 elections for Helena School District No. 1.

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn commented. "I would entertain a motion to approve the Resolution Requesting County to Conduct 2024 Elections as presented."

Motion: Trustee Jennifer McKee moved to approve the Resolution Requesting County to Conduct 2024 Elections as presented. Trustee Kay Satre seconded the motion.

Public Comment: None.

Vote: 6-0 motion carries unanimously.

2. Policy 5122: Criminal Background Investigation

Ms. Barb Ridgway presented Policy 5122: Criminal Background Investigation to the Board of Trustees. This is an existing policy that has been revised to clarify who is required to have a comprehensive criminal background investigation to include fingerprinting. It further clarifies that volunteers who have unsupervised access to District students will also be required to submit to a comprehensive background investigation. The only changes to the policy since it last went before the full board is on line 16 and line 41 the word employee was changed to candidate.

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn commented. "I would entertain a motion to approve Policy 5122: Criminal Background Investigation."

Motion: Trustee Jennifer McKee moved to approve Policy 5122: Criminal Background Investigation. Trustee Terry Beaver seconded the motion.

Public Comment: None.

Vote: 6-0 motion carries unanimously.

3. Policy 5610: Intellectual Property Rights

Ms. Barb Ridgway presented Policy 5610: Intellectual Property Rights to the Board of Trustees. This policy was developed at the request of the Helena Education Association and establishes intellectual property rights when materials which are original are developed using public resources. It defines how intellectual property is dealt with when created within the scope of the employee's responsibilities, outside the scope of the employee's responsibilities or a combination of the two. It further defines the relationship between the District and the employee should the District choose to purchase the materials. There were no changes requested to the policy since it last went before the full board.

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn commented. "I would entertain a motion to approve Policy 5610: Intellectual Property Rights."

Motion: Trustee Luke Muszkiewicz moved to approve Policy 5610: Intellectual Property Rights. Trustee Kay Satre seconded the motion.

Public Comment: None.

Vote: 6-0 motion carries unanimously.

4. Appoint MTSBA Municipal Director

Trustee Luke Muszkiewicz stated that the Board of Trustees are members of the Montana School Boards Association. The Montana School Boards Association Board of Directors is composed of seven municipal directors representing the seven largest districts and then 11 regional directors who are elected from MTSBA members within those regions. Trustee Muszkiewicz stated that he has had the privilege of serving as a municipal director for the Montana School Boards Association for the past six years and he would like to recommend that the Board of Trustees appoint Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn to serve as the next Helena Municipal Director for the Montana Schools Boards Association.

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn commented. "I would entertain a motion for this action item."

Motion: Trustee Luke Muszkiewicz moved to appoint Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn as the MTSBA Municipal Director. Trustee Kay Satre seconded the motion.

Public Comment: None.

Vote: 6-0 motion carries unanimously.

5. Personnel Actions

Ms. Keri Mizell presented the Personnel Actions to the Board of Trustees.

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn commented. "I would entertain a motion to approve the Personnel Actions."

Motion: Trustee Luke Muszkiewicz moved to approve the Personnel Actions. Trustee Jennifer McKee seconded the motion.

Public Comment: None.

Vote: 6-0 motion carries unanimously.

That concluded the Items for Action, and the Board of Trustees moved on to Reports.

D. REPORTS

1. Helena Education Association Report

Ms. Jane Shawn, President of the Helena Education Association, stated that she did not have a report to give tonight but she did want to express her appreciation that the levies passed.

2. Facilities and Maintenance Committee Report

Trustee Luke Muszkiewicz gave the Facilities and Maintenance Committee Report. Trustee Muszkiewicz shared that the Facilities Master Plan Key Stakeholder Meeting took place on Wednesday, April 26th at 4:00 p.m. Trustee Muszkiewicz stated it was a great meeting and expressed his appreciation to SMA Architecture and NAC Architecture for facilitating the meeting. They have been surveying and documenting the condition of our facilities and have conducted surveys of our community, our staff, and our students, and presented a summary of the community survey at the meeting. SMA and NAC walked the key stakeholder group through some potential scenarios that in the years ahead of us, we'll need to consider regarding our schools and administrative campuses. The group also discussed the pros and cons of renovation versus additions versus replacing schools as well as the pros and cons of boundary changes. Trustee Muszkiewicz was very clear that everything discussed at the key stakeholder meeting was scenarios and not proposals. There was a Facilities and Maintenance Committee meeting on May 1st and the committee was given a facilities and maintenance update, a custodial update, and a safety and security update. Trustee Muszkiewicz thanked Facility Director Todd Verrill and his team for all that they do for the district.

3. Budget and Finance Committee Report

Trustee Janet Armstrong gave the Budget and Finance Committee Report. At the Budget and Finance Committee the committee reviewed the budget to actual reports and the five-year forecast. The committee discussed the importance of keeping an eye on lane changes, because that is one of the parameters that we are keeping track of to make sure we are keeping our costs within budget. This was Trustee Muszkiewicz's last Budget and Finance Committee meeting and Trustee Armstrong said she will miss Trustee Muszkiewicz's insightful comments and questions.

4. Policy Committee Report

Trustee Luke Muszkiewicz gave the Policy Committee Report. Trustee Muszkiewicz thanked Chief of Staff Barb Ridgway and District Counsel Bea Kaleva for their outstanding work with the Policy Committee. Trustee Muszkiewicz stated that our district takes policy very seriously and we have a very methodical and conscientious approach that we go through on the Policy Committee and then we have good substantive reviews and discussions of district policy here as a full board.

5. Teaching & Learning Committee Report

Trustee Jennifer McKee gave the Teaching and Learning Committee Report. Trustee McKee stated that she and Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn went to Helena High and met with the Instructional Coaches and watched the instructional framework happen in action, and it was extremely well organized, and they were very impressed.

6. Health Benefits Committee Report

Trustee Kay Satre gave the Health Benefits Committee report. Trustee Satre stated that Rich Franco, Human Resources Benefits Manager, has been very busy over the past month getting data so that their committee can determine how much they need to increase health insurance premiums next year in order to keep our self-funded plan in good financial shape. The committee looked at projected increases in medical costs and that includes medical, dental and vision for this coming year plus projected enrollment numbers for the plan. These projected numbers point to a 12.5% increase in costs to the plan for the coming year, so the Health Benefits Committee is discussing whether to recommend that we increase premiums to match that expected cost increase or if we will choose to go with a lower increase of 9%. If we choose to go with the lower 9%, then we would expect to draw the remaining 3.5% higher cost from the plan's unreserved account. The committee must discuss whether going with the 9% premium increase would put too much of a dent in that account, putting our plan in financial risk. If premiums go up by either 9% or 12.5%, the big question is who will cover that additional cost for employees' health coverage. Last year we saw a premium increase of 15%, and at that time, the district's bargaining agreement, which covered two years from 2021 to 2023, required the district to cover that increase. Bargaining work is going on right now for the upcoming year and it's that process that will determine what portion, if any, of next year's premium hike will be paid by the district. The other option, of course, is for employees to pay for some portion of the hike. The Health Benefits Committee's job is to make a recommendation to the board about how much to increase premiums in order to keep our self-funded plan financially healthy. But of course, it's not the committee's job to decide who, whether the district or the employee, picks up the cost of the premium increase, that is for the bargaining team.

7. Wellness Committee Report

Assistant Superintendent Brian Cummings gave the Wellness Committee Report. The Nutrition Subcommittee is planning a powerful campaign on healthy snacks in schools which will be primarily focused on elementary schools. Through SNAP-Ed with the United States Agricultural Department there are robust support systems, flyers, and campaigns that they can take into the elementary schools.

8. Montana School Boards Association Report

Trustee Luke Muszkiewicz gave the Montana School Boards Association Report. Trustee Muszkiewicz stated that the legislative session ended May 2nd and MTSBA did great work this year representing our interests and probably most importantly in leading and facilitating the coalition of advocates for Montana's public schools. Trustee Muszkiewicz reviewed five bills which are significant to Helena Public Schools. First, he discussed HB 352 which is the bill to provide targeted interventions to support 3rd grade reading proficiency. Trustee Muszkiewicz discussed HB 332 which covers generally revised laws related to school employee health benefits. This bill provides \$40 million dollars of initial funding allocation to incentivize schools to create a statewide health insurance trust. Next, Trustee Muszkiewicz discussed HB 549 which authorizes the establishment of public charter schools and would require that any independent charter schools in the state of Montana would be governed by a publicly elected board and that they comply with all provisions of state law regarding education regulations. HB 562 is another charter school bill which would authorize the creation of charter schools that are unaccountable to a publicly elected school board or the Board of Public Education and would be exempted from most of the provisions of state law regarding education regulations. Trustee Muszkiewicz reviewed HB 393: establish the students with special needs equal opportunity act. This is to provide public funding to allow students with disabilities to attend private schools and pay for private vendor expenditures. Trustee Muszkiewicz concluded his report by sharing there are MTSBA training and governance opportunities coming up starting May 16th and orientation for newly elected trustees on May 16th, May 23rd, and May 30th. On June 8th there will be the MTSBA annual meeting virtually and here in Helena, followed by an all-day school board leadership training on June 9th.

That concluded the Reports portion of the agenda. The Board of Trustees moved on to board comments.

VII. BOARD COMMENTS

Trustee Luke Muszkiewicz thanked all the voters who gave him the opportunity to serve on the Helena Public Schools Board of Trustees, and thanked Superintendent Wertz, the administration team, and the other Board members for being an outstanding and special group of people and stated how much he will miss serving on the board.

The Trustees expressed their appreciation to Trustee Luke Muszkiewicz for his years of leadership and service on the Helena Public Schools Board of Trustees.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Board Chair Siobhan Hathorn adjourned the meeting at 9:51 p.m.

Candice Delvaux, Recording Secretary Date