



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 Policy Committee Meeting

Wednesday, October 4th, 2023

12:00 p.m.

Lincoln Center

1325 Poplar St., Helena, MT 59601

And via

TEAMS

MINUTES

Attendees

Committee:

Janet Armstrong, Committee Chair

Siobhan Hathhorn, Board Chair

Linda Cleatus, Committee Member

Others:

Rex Weltz, Superintendent

Barb Ridgway, Chief of Staff

Janelle Mickelson, Business Manager

Bea Kaleva, District Legal Counsel

Josh McKay, Assistant Superintendent

Gary Myers, Director of Technology

Candice Delvaux, Executive Assistant

Jane Shawn, HEA President

Keri Mizell, Human Resources Director

Karen Ogden, Communications Officer

Kaitlyn Hess, Assessment and Federal Programs

Lisa Cordingley, HEF Executive Director

Several Helena Public Schools Staff

Members

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 12:02 p.m. by the Committee Chair, Janet Armstrong.

II. REVIEW OF AGENDA

No changes were requested to the agenda.

III. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no general public comment.

IV. REVIEW OF THE 09.05.2023 POLICY COMMITTEE MINUTES

The committee reviewed and approved the 09.05.2023 Policy Committee minutes.

V. PRESENTATION OF POLICIES FOR FIRST READING

A. Policy 7515: Fund Balance

The committee reviewed Policy 7515: Fund Balance, which is an existing policy. The Board approves budgets that support the immediate and long-range goals and established priorities within instructional, non-instructional, and administrative programs. The Board requires that, before presentation of a proposed budget for adoption, the Superintendent and the Administrator for Business Operations will prepare, for Board consideration, appropriate documentation supporting recommendations for meeting District needs within the limits of anticipated revenues. Once adopted by the Board, the operating budget shall be administered by the Superintendent or Superintendent's designees. This Fund Balance Policy establishes the procedures for reporting unrestricted fund balance in the General Fund financial statements. Certain commitments and assignments of fund balance will help ensure that there will be adequate financial resources to protect the District against unforeseen circumstances and events such as revenue shortfalls and unanticipated expenditures. The policy also authorizes and directs the Administrator of Business Operations to prepare financial reports which accurately categorize fund balances as per Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statement No. 54, Fund Balance Reporting and Governmental Fund Type Definitions. After reviewing the policy, the Policy Committee had no recommended changes.

VI. PRESENTATION OF POLICIES FOR SECOND READING

B. Policy 1025: Board Member Term of Office

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed Policy 1025: Board Member Term of Office. This policy has been revised to incorporate requirements under House Bill 811 for a district clerk to cooperate with OPI in providing trustee contact information and that language is stated on lines 16 through 18. The Policy Committee determined that Policy 1025: Board Member Term of Office would go before the full board for action.

C. Policy 1020: School Board Elections

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed Policy 1020: School Board Elections. This policy has revised legal references to reflect House Bill 453, which requires that any levy or bond election form state that *“an increase in property taxes may lead to an increase in rental costs”* and must provide the impact on the taxes for homes valued at \$100,000, \$300,000, and \$600,000 at a minimum. The Policy Committee determined that Policy 1020: School Board Elections would go before the full board for action.

D. Policy 1065: Board Meetings

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed Policy 1065: Board Meetings. This policy has been revised to incorporate language from House Bill 724 requiring electronic posting of board and committee agendas on newspaper websites if free of charge or on a district website or social media page. A copy of the agenda will also be posted at the entrance of the Lincoln Center. The Policy Committee determined that Policy 1065: Board Meetings would go before the full board for action.

E. Policy 1085: Uniform Grievance Procedure

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed Policy 1085: Uniform Grievance Procedure. This policy has been revised to reflect the requirements of House Bill 504. This bill requires school districts to have a uniform grievance procedure providing for both informal and formal resolution of complaints as well as providing a printed version of the grievance policy upon request. The law also requires that a formal grievance process have a timeline that starts 30 days from the completion of the informal process. Clarification language was also added to state that the grievance process does not apply to those complaints covered by state or federal law that supersedes the uniform process. These would include issues related to special education under IDEA as well as disability discrimination and sexual harassment. The Policy Committee determined that Policy 1085: Uniform Grievance Procedure would go before the full board for action.

F. Policy 2015: Curriculum Development Content and Assessment

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed Policy 2015: Curriculum Development Content and Assessment. This policy has been revised to reflect changes in the law related to remote and offsite instruction from House Bill 214. Revisions were also made to reflect

changes made to the accreditation rules in Chapter 10.55 of the Montana Administrative Rules and legal references were also updated. The Policy Committee determined that Policy 2015: Curriculum Development Content and Assessment would go before the full board for action.

G. Policy 2020: Student and Family Privacy Rights

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed Policy 2020: Student and Family Privacy Rights. This policy has been completely revised to reflect the language adopted in House Bill 676 regarding parental rights as well as participation surveys. The Policy Committee determined that Policy 2020: Student and Family Privacy Rights would go before the full board for action.

H. Policy 2025: K-12 School Counseling

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed Policy 2025: K-12 School Counseling. This policy has been revised to reflect House Bill 458 which permits (but does not require) high schools to hire career coaches. The language of the bill allows the use of a career coach to assist with K-12 career and vocational/technical training, but most of the language is applicable to only high schools. The revised language is stated on lines 29 through 32. The Policy Committee suggested that the words *handicapping conditions* on line 26 be changed to state *disability/mobility*. The Policy Committee determined that Policy 2025: K-12 School Counseling would go before the full board for action.

I. Policy 3097: Video Surveillance

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed Policy 3097: Video Surveillance. Language was added to this policy on line 22 to clarify that staff members cannot video a student in a classroom without permission from the parents, which is required by House Bill 676. That bill does not require parental permission for recording a student for purposes of security or surveillance. The Policy Committee determined that Policy 3097: Video Surveillance would go before the full board for action.

J. **OVERVIEW PARENTAL RIGHTS-HB676 and SB518**

The committee had a robust discussion about the 2023 legislative session and education-related legislation and its impact on school district policy. The School Administrators of Montana (SAM) tracked 169 education-related bills during the 2023 Legislature and 96 of the 169 bills stand to potentially impact local school policy in some way. The committee reviewed in depth HB676 and SB518, and Ms. Bea Kaleva, District Legal Counsel, and Ms. Barb Ridgway, Chief of Staff, answered any questions the Policy Committee had regarding these bills.

K. **SUPERINTENDENT OR BOARD COMMENTS**

There were no superintendent or board comments.

L. **ADJOURNMENT**

Committee Chair, Janet Armstrong, adjourned the meeting at 1:43 p.m.