



*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, October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023

11:30 a.m. Tour of HMS followed by Business & TEAMS Portion of the Meeting at 12:00 p.m.  
Helena Middle School and via TEAMS

### MINUTES

#### ATTENDEES

<i>Trustees</i>	<i>Others</i>
Siobhan Hathhorn, Board Chair	Rex Weltz, Superintendent
Linda Cleatus, Trustee	Josh McKay, Assistant Superintendent
Janet Armstrong, Trustee	Jane Shawn, HEA President
Terry Beaver, Trustee	Janelle Mickelson, Business Manager
Jeff Hindoién, Trustee	Lona Carter, Student Health
Kay Satre, Trustee	Todd Verill, Director of Facilities
	Barb Ridgway, Chief of Staff
	Keri Mizell, Human Resources Director
	Karen Ogden, Communications Officer
	Candice Delvaux, Executive Assistant
	Stuart Beardsley, IT Associate
	Kaitlyn Hess, Assessment and Federal Programs
	Cal Boyle, Principal of Helena Middle School
	Aleisha Sumner, Helena Middle School Secretary
	Joslyn Davidson, Curriculum Director
	Matt Carey, PAL Principal
	Erin Hunt, Instructional Coach
	Abby Kuhl, Instructional Coach

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

Board Chair Siobhan Hathorn called the meeting to order at 12:10 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 and the Board of Trustees moved on to view a presentation given by Mr. Cal Boyle, Principal of Helena Middle School.

**IV. PRESENTATION**

The Board of Trustees reviewed a presentation given by Mr. Cal Boyle, Principal of Helena Middle School. Principal Boyle began with a Helena Middle School staff and student overview:

Staff

- 38.5 Classroom Teachers (reduction of four in the past two years)
- 5 Special Education Teachers
- 1.5 Librarians
- 2 Counselors
- 1 School Psychologist
- 1 Building Learning Coordinator
- 1 Social Worker
- .6 FTE Nurse
- 2 Tutors
  - IEFA
  - NET/ISS
- 1 CSCT Therapist, 1 Behavior Interventionist
- Classified Staff
  - 4 Secretaries
  - 1.5 General Education Paras
  - 4 Special Education Paras
  - 1 Nurse Para
  - 4 Cafeteria Staff

- 5 Custodians
  - 1 daytime, 1 unfilled
- 1 SRO
- 1 Assistant Principal
- 1 Principal

## Students

- Total Enrollment=665
  - X Work=27
- Free and Reduced: 30%
- PEAK: 63 eligible
- District Transportation: 260
- Individualized Education Plans: 159
  - Increase of 39 in two years despite enrollment decrease of over 50
- Speech/Language Only: 20
- Students in Transition: 42 (16 in 2021)
- Angel Fund: 44 students so far

Principal Boyle discussed bell-to-bell instruction at Helena Middle School and moved on to discuss the Comprehensive Literacy Grant.

## Comprehensive Literacy Grant:

- Last year of the MCLSDP Grant
- SLT Goals
  - Academic Goals (SBA and i-Ready)
  - 80% Exit Tickets
  - Use of data for inventions and instructions
  - PD aligned with teacher wants/needs and instructional rounds data
- Instructional Rounds 23-24
  - Beginnings (Bell Ringer, Agenda, Greeting Students)
  - Random Calling
  - Precision Partnering

Principal Boyle reviewed the 2023 fall i-Ready reading diagnostic and 2023 fall i-Ready math diagnostic data with the Board of Trustees. Principal Boyle then shared all the amazing clubs that students can join at Helena Middle School and concluded his presentation by answering any questions the Board of Trustees had about Helena Middle School.

The Board of Trustees moved on to review the Consent Action Items and the Item for Action.

V. **NEW BUSINESS**

A. **Consent Action Items**

1. Personnel Actions
2. 09.26.23 Board of Trustees Work Session Minutes
3. 09.27.23 FMP Key Stakeholder Meeting Minutes
4. 10.02.23 Special Board Meeting Minutes

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

**Motion:** Trustee Jeff Hindoien moved to approve the Consent Action Items as presented. Trustee Janet Armstrong seconded the motion.

**Public Comment:** None.

**Vote:** 6-0 motion carries unanimously.

B. **Item For Action**

1. Approval of HPS-AFSCME Collective Bargaining Agreement

The Board of Trustees reviewed and discussed the HPS-AFSCME Collective Bargaining Agreement. Pursuant to MCA 39-31-306, an agreement reached by the public employer and the exclusive representative must be reduced to writing and must be executed by both parties.

The Helena School District and the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Montana Council #9 Local #2774, reached a tentative agreement on September 22, 2023. The Custodians (approximately 70 members) ratified the tentative agreement to the contract and notified us on October 12, 2023. The District negotiation team recommends ratification. The two (2) year agreement was open for language and wages for July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2025.

Ms. Keri Mizell, Human Resources Director for Helena Public Schools, pointed out in the HPS-AFSCME Collective Bargaining Agreement memorandum under the section of compensation summary the amount \$40,000 should state \$40,000.

Siobhan Hathhorn, Board Chair, commented. "I would entertain a motion to approve the HPS-AFSCME Collective Bargaining Agreement ."

**Motion:** Trustee Jeff Hindoien moved to approve the HPS-AFSCME Collective Bargaining Agreement as presented. Trustee Kay Satre seconded the motion.

**Public Comment:** None

**Vote:** 6-0 motion carries unanimously.

The Board of Trustees moved on to review the Items for Information.

**C. Items for Information**

1. RFP May Butler Center

The Board of Trustees moved on to review and discuss requests for proposals (RFPs) for the May Butler Center building. Superintendent Weltz discussed that the district would like to see what interest there is in the May Butler Center building, so that we can see what revenue the district could gain from leasing the building. Superintendent Weltz mentioned that we will draft an RFP and this will come before the board at a future meeting for further review and discussion.

2. Charter Schools

The Board of Trustees moved to discuss charter schools. The 2023 Legislative session resulted in the passage of two Charter School bills – House Bill 549 and House Bill 562. The Governor signed both into law on May 18, 2023, but in June, a lawsuit was filed against House Bill 562 and a decision is likely months away. However, HB 549 is moving forward, and charter school applications are being accepted by the Montana Board of Public Education and are due no later than November 1, 2023. The district will be submitting three charter school proposals. They include an expanded Project for Alternative Learning Charter School, a Montessori Charter School, and a hybrid online and in-person Charter School called Mount Ascension Learning Academy Charter School. The Montana Board of Public Education will review our submitted applications and we will know if applications are approved in January 2024. There were no board comments or objections with moving forward with the proposed charter school applications that the district will submit.

3. Levy Communication Update

The Board of Trustees moved on to receive a levy communication update from Superintendent Weltz. In the next three weeks, Superintendent Weltz and his administrative team will visit every school to share the “why” for both the Safety and Security Levy and the Technology Levy which will be on the ballot in May of 2024. Technology and Safety are critical to our organization and imperative to daily functions at each site. The costs we incur for both safety and technology are being supplemented by the general fund and we are actively seeking opportunities to lessen the burden on the general fund. If both levies are successful general fund monies currently supplementing safety and technology could be redirected to costs that we are currently struggling to cover – from salaries and curriculum to utilities. There were no board comments or questions about the levies and the board moved on to discuss HB 332.

#### 4. Health Truste Update-HB 332

The Board of Trustees moved on to receive a health trust update and to discuss House Bill 332. The 2023 Legislature enacted a statute that revised school district health insurance laws and provides one-time incentive funding for school districts that participate in a qualifying health insurance trust. At least 12,000 employees must be covered under the trust to qualify for the incentive, and it will be necessary for some or all the AA districts to participate in the health trust in order to meet the 12,000-member threshold. If a trust has been qualified by the state auditor on or before June 30, 2026, with the expectation that the health trust would become effective on July 1, 2026, then the \$40 million incentive would be used to stabilize health insurance through the capitalization of an operating reserve for the district members of the trust. This is a very complex undertaking, and the AA districts are working with an insurance expert to better understand the governance structure and to determine whether or not joining the trust is a benefit for HSD employees and employees across the state. Micah Hill, Missoula Superintendent, and Superintendent Rex Weltz are serving as the AA representatives who will conduct the analysis. They have brought in Ms. Marilyn Bartlett, who is an expert in this field, to help them understand what a large multidistrict school trust would look like and will help provide them with guidance so that they know what their next steps are. Superintendent Weltz will continue to update the Board as they work through the process.

#### 5. Budget Consensus Recommendation Committee Update

The Board of Trustees moved on to receive a Budget Consensus Recommendation Committee update and to review the draft budget value statements. This committee of both external and internal stakeholders has several more sessions scheduled. Currently, the committee is drafting the Budget Value Statements and ultimately, the goal is to provide recommendations to the Board that will illustrate what services and staff we will be able to maintain if we are successful in passing the Tech and Safety and Security levies and what reductions will have to be made if the levies are not successful. The Budget Consensus Recommendation Committee will be meeting again November 1<sup>st</sup> at 4:00 p.m., followed by a second meeting in November.

#### 6. Handle With Care Update

The Board of Trustees moved on to receive a Handle With Care update. Last spring the district in partnership with the Helena Police Department began work to establish an agreement that would create a "Handle with Care" program and process which was fully implemented when school began this fall. The Handle

with Care program establishes a protocol for police officers to notify designated district staff if they respond to a traumatic incident that involves a school-aged child. The notification includes the student's name with the instruction – Handle With Care. It does not detail the traumatic event. The principal of the school with the impacted student(s) is notified and in turn, they notify appropriate staff - teachers, the school counselor, the school nurse, and other relevant support staff to help keep a caring eye on the student and provide appropriate trauma-sensitive interventions, if necessary. To date we have received over 38 Handle With Care notifications.

Superintendent Wertz concluded the meeting by sharing with the Board the Students in Transition Newsletter provided by Ms. Michele Zentz, Homeless Liaison for Helena Public Schools. We continue to see a dramatic increase in the number of homeless or unsheltered students in our schools. We have 277 students who are either homeless or unsheltered, and at this same time last year we had around 190.

**VI. BOARD COMMENTS**

Trustee Janet Armstrong stated that the school district plays so many different roles and she fervently hopes that the trustees can speak with various schools, parents, and community members to share all this work that is being done.

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

Board Chair Siobhan Hathorn adjourned the meeting at 1:45 p.m.

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Candice Delvaux, Recording Secretary