



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
Teaching and Learning Committee Meeting
Wednesday, December 6th, 2023
12:00pm
Lincoln Center & TEAMS

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE

<i>Trustees:</i>	<i>Others:</i>
Siobhan Hathhorn, Board Chair	Rex Weltz, Superintendent
Kay Satre, Trustee	Gary Myers, Director of Educational Technology
Linda Cleatus, Trustee	Jane Shawn, HEA President
Janet Armstrong, Trustee	Kaitlyn Hess, Assessment and Federal Programs
	Barb Ridgway, Chief of Staff
	Melissa Romano-Lehman, Instructional Coach
	Josh McKay, Assistant Superintendent
	Joslyn Davidson, Curriculum Director
	Lona Carter, Student Health
	Abby Kuhl, Instructional Coach
	Candice Delvaux, Executive Assistant
	Tia Wilkins, Principal of Warren Elementary
	Kerri Sutkus, CHS Teacher
	Karen Ogden, Communications Officer
	Keri Mizell, Human Resources Director
	Jamie Bawden, CHS Teacher

I. CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting was called to order at 12:01 p.m. by Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn.

II. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no general public comment.

III. REVIEW OF AGENDA

No changes were requested to the agenda.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The committee reviewed and approved the minutes from the 10.04.23 Teaching and Learning Committee Meeting.

V. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/DISCUSSION

A. Mount Ascension

Ms. Kaitlyn Hess, Assessment and Federal Programs, presented the Mount Ascension program to the Teaching and Learning Committee. The Mount Ascension Learning Laboratory program is personalized learning to bring students to new heights and place them on an individual path to success and offers transition classrooms at HHS and CHS. The program is designed for students who are credit deficient or in jeopardy of credits through an educational disruption such as: homelessness (McKinney Vento, group home, foster, guardianship issues), homebound circumstances, mental health crises, or other extenuating circumstances. The educational experience within this classroom is unique for each student. The mission statement for Mount Ascension is: *At Mt. Ascension, our mission is to provide a transformative and personalized education experience that empowers students to thrive academically, socially, and personally. We are committed to fostering a supportive and inclusive learning community where each student can reach their full potential, prepare for the future, and become responsible global citizens.* The vision statement for the program is: *Our vision is to be a pioneering force in education, recognized for innovation, excellence, and adaptability. At Mt. Ascension, we envision a future where students, regardless of their location or individual circumstance, have access to a high-quality education that is tailored to their unique needs and aspirations. We aim to cultivate a culture of lifelong learning, and critical thinking, equipping our graduates with the skills and values needed to lead in a rapidly evolving world.* There are two classrooms in the district with other satellite programs at PAL and CRA. Jamie Bawden and Kerri Sutkas are the CHS teachers, and Emily Harris is the HHS teacher. There are three options for learning:

Option 1: Blended Model

Option 2: On campus lab only Model

Option 3: Remote Model

The online curriculum is offered through Edgenuity and students can receive online virtual support from their teacher or from their teacher in person in the learning lab. The Teaching and Learning Committee moved on to discuss standards-based grading (SBG) in the district.

B. SBG

The Teaching and Learning Committee were given a standards-based grading (SBG) overview from Ms. Tia Wilkins, Principal of Warren Elementary School. “The Standards Based Grading Team is comprised of 2-3 volunteer teachers from each elementary school, instructional coaches, and four administrator leads. Last year we collected feedback from educators, which guided our work and Standards Based Reading goals. We now have two versions (Word and Excel) for report cards. Teachers can opt into using whatever report card they feel most comfortable navigating. When we started this work there were multiple versions of the HSD report card. For example, one grade level had 9 versions of the district report card! Our hope is to stay aligned and consistent in our reporting to families. We have created and disseminated a K-5 Standards Based Grading brochure to help families with their understanding of how we report on their child’s learning progression. The Standards Based Grading team worked closely with the Into Reading pilot group. Documents needed to be adjusted to match instructional pacing. SBG members updated narratives in hopes of making them more family friendly. This year we are navigating a few transitions with curriculum. Since we have some teachers teaching Math Expressions and others piloting Eureka math, Melissa Romano created math narratives for each grade level for Eureka math. For writing, we have some teachers using Yolanda’s work and others following the Into Reading curriculum. Abby Kuhl wrote narratives for Into Reading writing—those will be shared with teachers at grade level meetings. Success Criteria documents were created by SBG members. The success criteria highlight each domain, the essential standards, and the skills within those standards. The hope with these documents is that they support teachers with understanding what to focus on when grading each trimester. Currently, Abby Kuhl is working to get trimester two and three ELA success criteria completed. Grade level teams will continue to provide feedback on the Success Criteria document, and it will continue to become more comprehensive. P.E, Music, and Library narratives have been updated and reflect trimester work. Specialists have done a stellar job collaborating and communicating with teachers in their buildings. Grade levels are having thoughtful conversations on students’ progression and mastery of standards. Our goal is to be as consistent as we can as grade level teams. We can’t speak more highly of the Standards Based Grading task force- they are a team of dedicated, passionate, and hard-working teachers who have volunteered their time and expertise. It’s been a heavy lift to create K-5 standardized report cards and supporting documents. The SBG team members’ passion, reflection, desire to learn, and willingness to take on this work is why we have been able to come as far as we have. We are truly thankful for all K-5 elementary teachers and their willingness to shift into this reporting method and their desire to truly understand what skills students need to meet grade-level expectations. We are continuing to communicate with our families regarding Standards Based Grading. This first trimester we will be sharing a parent-friendly proficiency scale, parent teacher conference guidelines, and a tutorial on standards-based grading that does a wonderful job comparing a more traditional way of grading with SBG.” The Teaching and Learning Committee moved on to discuss grade level meetings in the district.

C. Grade Level Meetings

Ms. Joslyn Davidson, Curriculum Director, discussed grade level meetings. “We normally have grade level meetings twice a year where we pull each grade level together and have conversations about topics like standards-based report cards, or we offer professional development. We have used those grade level meetings to really pull the district together with a system that's consistent across all schools. We unfortunately do not have enough subs to always cover staff being taken out of their buildings to attend grade level meetings, so we tried a new format last year where we had a representative from each school and each grade level, and those meetings went well. This year we are experiencing the same difficulty in finding substitutes, and we determined that we couldn't pull staff from the schools to attend grade level meetings because it was creating deficits in other places.” Ms. Davidson and several others came together to brainstorm what they could do to replace those grade level meetings, because they still have information that they need to get out to everyone, and they still need to offer professional development. They came up with the idea of offering an optional professional development session the third Monday of every month, and to record the meeting for people who can't attend so they can watch it. Ms. Abby Kuhl, Instructional Coach, shared some of the ways they decide which professional development they will offer this year such as sharing a survey with different options for teachers to choose from. Ms. Kuhl discussed the upcoming professional development they will be offering based upon the survey results. Ms. Kuhl stated this new style of offering professional development has been very successful and met with great feedback from the teachers.

D. Social Studies and Science HS Curriculum Work

The Teaching and Learning Committee did not have enough time to discuss Social Studies and Science HS Curriculum work and determined it would be reviewed at a future Teaching and Learning Committee meeting.

Ms. Hess, Ms. Davidson, Ms. Kuhl, and Principal Wilkins proceeded to answer any questions the trustees had regarding the presentation today.

VI. BOARD COMMENTS

There were no further board comments.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:59 p.m. by Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn.