



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, January 23rd, 2024

11:30 a.m. Tour of Jefferson followed by Business & TEAMS Portion of the Meeting at 12:00 p.m.
Jefferson Elementary 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
Janet Armstrong, Trustee	Barb Ridgway, Chief of Staff
Terry Beaver, Trustee	Janelle Mickelson, Business Manager
Jeff Hindoién, Trustee	Lona Carter, Student Health
Kay Satre, Trustee	Joslyn Davidson, Curriculum Director
Jennifer Walsh, Trustee	Todd Verill, Director of Facilities
Linda Cleatus, Trustee	Keri Mizell, Human Resources Director
	Candice Delvaux, Executive Assistant
	Gary Myers, Director of Educational Technology
	Kaitlyn Hess, Assessment and Federal Programs
	Jane Shawn, HEA President
	Tia Wilkins, Principal of Warren Elementary
	Brice Burton, Principal of Jefferson Elementary
	Jill Putnam, Teacher at Jefferson Elementary
	Several Guests of the Public Online

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

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn called the meeting to order at 12:08 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. Brice Burton, Principal of Jefferson Elementary School.

IV. PRESENTATION

The Board of Trustees reviewed a presentation given by Mr. Brice Burton, Principal of Jefferson Elementary.

Principal Burton shared the mission statement of Jefferson Elementary, *“We at Jefferson School are committed to creating a safe, enriched, and challenging educational environment which supports and promotes the intellectual, social, emotional, and physical growth and development of each child. Staff, students, and parents work together, sharing the responsibility of creating an optimum educational environment that responds to students and community needs. At Jefferson School, we are a community of lifelong learners where the unique abilities and talents of each person are valued and nurtured.*

Principal Burton reviewed the staff demographics at Jefferson Elementary School:

- 11 Classroom teachers
- 1 Special Education Teacher
- 1 Special Education PreK Teacher
- 1 Counselor
- 1 Librarian
- 1 Music (Split with Smith)
- 1 PE (Split with Smith)
- 1 SLP (Split with Hawthorne & PAL)
- 1 Nurse (Split with 4G's)
- 1 Psych (Split with Central)
- 6 Paraeducators: 2 SPED, 1 PreK SPED, 3 Gen. Ed
- 1 Day and 1 Evening Custodian
- 1 Food Service Staff
- 3 SACC Employees
- 1 Administrator
- 1 Administrative Assistant

Next, Principal Burton reviewed the student statistics at Jefferson Elementary School:

- Enrollment – 243
- K – 39
- 1 – 37
- 2 – 39
- 3 – 39
- 4 – 46
- 5 – 42
- Attendance Percentage 94.12%
- Free and Reduced Percentage 22%
- McKinney Vento Percentage 2.5%
- 2023-2024 PTC Attendance 99%

Classrooms

- 11 General Education Classrooms
- 2 Kindergarten
- 2 First
- 2 Second
- 1 Third
- 1 Third/Fourth Combination
- 1 Fourth
- 1 Fourth/Fifth Combination
- 1 Fifth
- 1 Special Education PreK

Principal Burton reviewed the facilities at Jefferson Elementary School:

- Built in 1891 (1949)
- Roof 2020
- Heating & Cooling System 2020
- PreK Fenced area 2023

- Community Building Use
 - Girl/Boy Scouts
 - Helena Sport Clubs
 - YMCA Basketball

Next, Principal Burton reviewed the school data from the SBAC 2021-2022, SBAC 2022-2023, iReady (Reading) Spring, and iReady (Math) Spring. Principal Burton introduced Jill Putnam, educator at Jefferson Elementary, to the Board of Trustees. Ms. Putnam shared an example of her *Communication is Key* K-2 weekly newsletter with the trustees. Principal Burton concluded his presentation by discussing family nights, assemblies, and community

engagement at Jefferson Elementary. Principal Burton answered any questions the trustees had about his presentation.

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

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Consent Action Items

1. Personnel Actions
2. 11.28.23 Board Work Session Meeting Minutes

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

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

Public Comment: None.

Vote: 8-0 motion carries unanimously.

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

B. Item For Action

1. Approval of HPS-HEA Para Educator Collective Bargaining Agreement

Background:

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 Helena Education Association (HEA) reached a tentative agreement on January 4, 2024. The Para Educators ratified the tentative agreement to the contract and notified us on January 18, 2024. The District negotiation team recommends ratification.

Considerations:

HPS and HEA have a collaborative relationship and productive negotiations history.

This one-year wage agreement supports the directive of the Board to support our staff members and address issues relative to the district budget.

Superintendent recommendation:

Approve and ratify the collective bargaining agreement as agreed upon between HPS and the Para Educators.

Siobhan Hathhorn, Board Chair, commented. "I would entertain a motion for the Approval of HPS-HEA Para Educator Collective Bargaining Agreement as presented."

Motion: Trustee Jennifer McKee moved to approve the HPS-HEA Para Educator Collective Bargaining Agreement as presented. Trustee Janet Armstrong seconded the motion.

Public Comment: None.

Vote: 8-0 motion carries unanimously.

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

C. Item for Information

1. Levies Discussion

Superintendent Rex Weltz shared a presentation regarding the safety and security and technology levies. Superintendent Weltz said this presentation would give a better understanding of why the Helena Public Schools requires additional support for its safety and security and technology needs. Superintendent Weltz discussed that it is important to understand the difference between HSD funding sources such as the general fund, building reserve funds, and safety/security and technology funds. The general fund pays for things such as staff salaries and benefits, day-to-day operating expenses, curriculum, supplies (classroom, maintenance, custodial), utilities, insurance (property and liability and cyber security), technology, and safety and security. Without the safety/security and tech levy, the general fund is greatly impacted because every dollar spent on safety/security and technology from the general fund means less money for schools, students, and staff costs. The building reserve pays for things such as major and minor building projects, routine maintenance and repairs, and deferred maintenance (limited) and things such as reroofing, boiler replacements, flooring, sidewalks, HVAC, lighting, and window replacement. After paying for all these items there is not enough buildings reserve funds or monies from the general fund to allocate to the safety and security needs of our district, that is why the safety and security levy is so crucial because our purpose is to provide the safest atmosphere and environment for our students and staff working and learning. Safety and security are extremely important. Superintendent Weltz stated that the safety and security levy will pay for items such as environmental health, safety and compliance, SEC report recommendations, fire safety, playground safety(elementary), physical security, information technology (IT), staff safety responsibility, air conditioning and filtration, classroom window coverings and identification, updated detection,

alarms, and controls, equipment repair/replace and fall material, building/classroom door locks, access controls (key fobs, security recognitions), and teacher/secretary/custodial % salary. The percentage of staff salaries tied to safety and security levy include responsibilities such as:

Supervision:

Maintain constant supervision of students during class time, transitions, and other school activities.

Be aware of the whereabouts of all students under their care.

Emergency Procedures:

Familiarize themselves with the school's emergency procedures, including evacuation routes, lockdown procedures, and other crisis response plans. Conduct regular emergency drills to ensure students are familiar with evacuation and safety protocols.

Classroom Safety:

Maintain an organized and clutter-free classroom to minimize hazards.

Ensure that classroom furniture and equipment are in good condition and pose no safety risks.

Keep emergency supplies, such as a first aid kit, easily accessible.

Communication:

Establish effective communication with students to create a trusting environment where they feel comfortable reporting safety concerns.

Collaborate with colleagues, school administrators, and support staff to share safety-related information and coordinate efforts.

Visitor Management:

Be vigilant about monitoring and questioning unfamiliar individuals on school premises.

Follow school policies for visitor sign-ins and ensure that unauthorized persons are not allowed access to classrooms or other secure areas.

Health and Wellness:

Encourage and model healthy habits among students, such as proper hygiene and nutrition.

Be aware of students with specific health needs or allergies and take necessary precautions to ensure their well-being.

Conflict Resolution:

Address conflicts and behavioral issues promptly to prevent escalation.

Implement effective classroom management strategies to create a positive and respectful learning environment.

Technology Safety:

Monitor and guide students in the responsible use of technology to prevent cyberbullying, inappropriate content, or any other online safety issues.

Teach students about internet safety and the potential risks associated with online activities.

Professional Development:

Participate in safety and security training sessions provided by the school.

Stay informed about new safety protocols, technologies, and best practices through ongoing professional development.

Crisis Intervention:

Be prepared to provide emotional support to students during and after crises, such as natural disasters, accidents, or other traumatic events.

Superintendent Weltz moved on to discuss the need for a technology levy and began by reviewing what technology in the district looked like back in 2005 compared to what technology in the district looks like now in 2023. In 2005 there was about one desktop computer per teacher, in an elementary school there was one cart of laptops or lab per elementary, two carts or labs per middle and high schools, a TV in each room, a few wireless access points in each building, the “slowest imaginable” network, and the first carts of Chromebooks were added in 2015. In 2023 there are over 1,000+ teacher devices, over 7,800 student devices, 4,000 average users at any time, 5Gb internet, 600 wireless access points, most of the curricular resources are online, projectors are in most learning spaces, there are powerful online tools, and millions of documents are created by students and teachers each year.

Superintendent Weltz stated that the technology needs in the district have expanded dramatically and a technology levy could pay for:

1. Device Replacement
 - Student devices-iPads and Chromebooks (5-7 year cycle)
 - Teacher/staff devices-laptops (5-7 year cycle)
 - Classroom devices-projectors, cameras, labs, phones (7-10 year cycle)
2. Network and Services
 - Internet connectivity
 - Software licensing
 - Curriculum resources
3. Support
 - Applications management
 - Network and administration

Superintendent Weltz reviewed what the annual tax impact on a \$100K home, \$300K home, and \$600K home would be for the proposed technology and safety and security levies combined for the elementary and high school.

Superintendent Weltz concluded his presentation by answering any questions the trustees had regarding his presentation.

The Board of Trustees moved on to hear any final board comments.

VI. BOARD COMMENTS

There were no further board comments.

Superintendent Weltz thanked his team at the district office for their work in solidifying the lease with St. Peter's Health which will bring in revenue to the district. Superintendent Weltz also thanked his team for their work in submitting three charter school applications, all of which were approved, and which will also bring additional revenue into the district. Superintendent Weltz said it is not only good for the budget, but also good for our students and families.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Board Chair Siobhan Hathorn adjourned the meeting at 1:25 p.m.

Candice Delvaux, Recording Secretary