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# HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT FACILITIES MASTER PLAN

Helena, Montana

FEBRUARY 2024

**DRAFT**

**HELENA (SMA)**

920 Front Street, Suite 101  
Helena, MT 59601  
P: 406.442.4933

**BOZEMAN (SMA)**

428 East Mendenhall Street  
Bozeman, MT 59715  
P: 406.219.2216

**SEATTLE (NAC)**

2025 1st Avenue, Suite 300  
Seattle, WA 98121  
P: 206.441.4522

 **SMA.DESIGN**

 **NACARCHITECTURE.COM**

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

0

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY..... A.4

WORK PLAN | SCHEDULE ..... A.5

1

PART 1: DATA COLLECTION & ANALYSIS; COMMUNITY INPUT & SITE-BASED PLANNING

1.1 FACILITY NEEDS ASSOCIATED WITH 21ST CENTURY MODEL OF EDUCATION..... 1.1

1.2 CURRENT TRENDS IN PUBLIC SCHOOL CURRICULA ..... 1.6

1.3 FACILITY NEEDS OF CURRENT TECHNOLOGY, PROJECTED TECHNOLOGY PURCHASES, IMPLEMENTATION AND FUTURE TRENDS ..... 1.7

1.4 DEMOGRAPHIC DATA, DISTRICT ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS & TRENDS FOR FACILITY NEEDS..... 1.9

1.5 DEFERRED MAINTENANCE ASSESSMENT, REAL ESTATE MARKET ANALYSIS..... 1.12

1.6 COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS FOR DISTRICT FACILITY NEEDS ..... 1.14

1.7 ENGAGE ALL STAKEHOLDERS..... 1.15

2

PART 2: COMPREHENSIVE LONG RANGE FACILITIES MASTER PLAN OPTIONS, REQUIREMENTS & OPTIONS

2.1 PROPOSALS FOR RENOVATIONS/ADDITIONS TO EXISTING FACILITIES ..... 2.4

2.2 PROPOSALS FOR BEST PRACTICES FOR NEW FACILITY CONSTRUCTION ..... 2.44

2.3 NEW SITE/FACILITY ACQUISITION ..... 2.47

2.4 SALE, TRADE, MAINTENANCE, DISPOSAL OF CURRENT FACILITIES..... 2.44

2.5 COST/BENEFIT ASSESSMENT OF ALL FACILITIES OPTIONS ..... 2.49

2.6 SUSTAINABILITY/ENERGY CONSERVATION ANALYSIS ..... 2.50

2.7 OPTIONS/ALTERNATIVES FOR COMPREHENSIVE LONG RANGE MASTER PLAN ..... 2.54

2.8 RECOMMENDATION FOR FINAL ADOPTION BY BOARD OF TRUSTEES ..... 2.116

3

PART 3: DRAFTING & IMPLEMENTATION OF COMPREHENSIVE LONG RANGE FACILITIES MASTER PLAN

3.1 DRAFT COMPREHENSIVE LONG RANGE MASTER PLAN DOCUMENT & ACTION STEPS

2.7 BOARD OF TRUSTEES ADOPTION OF FINAL COMPREHENSIVE LONG RANGE FACILITIES MASTER PLAN DOCUMENT

A

APPENDIX A | SITE VISIT NOTES

B

APPENDIX B | SURVEY RESULTS

C

APPENDIX C | MEETING NOTES

D

APPENDIX D | DEFERRED MAINTENANCE REPORT

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OWNER

Helena School District  
1325 Polar St  
Helena, Montana 59601  
406 324 2000  
[www.helenaschools.org](http://www.helenaschools.org)  
Superintendent: Rex Weltz

ARCHITECT

SMA Architecture and Design  
Tim Meldrum, AIA, NCARB, LEED AP & Klint Fisher, AIA, NCARB  
920 Front Street, Suite 101  
Helena, Montana 59601  
406 442 4933  
[sma.design](http://sma.design)

EDUCATION CONSULTANT

NAC Architecture  
Kevin Flanagan, AIA, LEED AP & Philip Riedel, AIA, ALEP, LEED AP  
2025 1st Ave #300  
Seattle, Washington 98121  
206 441 4522  
[www.nacarchitecture.com](http://www.nacarchitecture.com)

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

SMA Architecture and the Design Team would like to thank Superintendent Rex Weltz, the Facilities Committee, and the Helena School District’s board, administration and staff for their patience and assistance during the preparation of this document. ■

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (IN PROGRESS)

The Helena community is slowly growing, school district boundaries are facing pressures from population and neighborhood shifts, building maintenance needs are looming and post-pandemic influences are influencing new creative solutions for how our students experience their primary education years. It is our opportunity to invest in the future of education in our community.

Our District facilities require significant attention to address deferred maintenance and upgrade essential systems, modernize classrooms and other learning spaces, libraries and athletic spaces. The plan will include a prioritization process to optimally allocate resources and effectively maximize the benefits for students, staff, and the community.

The planning process is strategically phased to include information gathering, facility evaluation and prioritization of improvement projects and growth mitigation, creating a long range implementation plan and facilitating the adoption of the plan. It will always be critical to maintain revisiting the plan to keep it up-to-date and relevant to needed improvements.

To date, our discovery process has facilitated important community stakeholder meetings, surveys, building tours and initial needs assessments including technology and infrastructure needs. Our team has learned that there are significant building maintenance needs, upwards of an estimate \$88M, that have been long deferred, utility costs are higher than they should be due to aging and inefficient buildings, and opportunities to balance the enrollment trends that populate the east and west side middle and high schools.

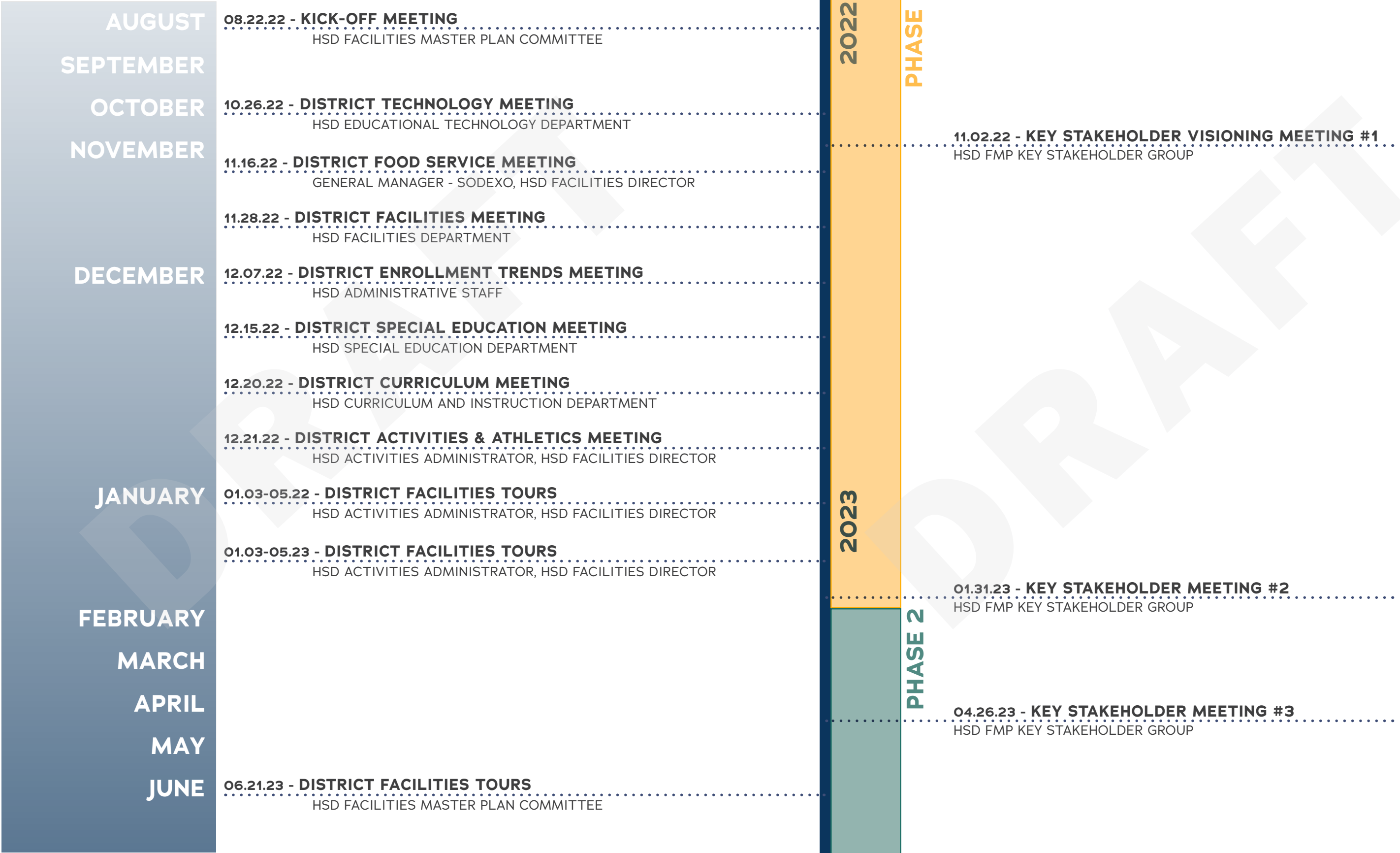
Unprecedented construction material and labor costs are adding pressure to decision-makers regarding bond amounts and maintenance costs but the impact of time on our facilities will not slow and may in fact quickly trend higher in exponential fashion. An important component to the planning process will be the correct messaging and the cadence at which it is offered to the community. Having significant needs for bonds and reserve levy funds, the community must learn the critical nature around what the determined improvements will impact or perhaps what will continue to happen if we do not make these investments.

The District Facilities Master Plan provides a road map to address the challenges and opportunities related to the aging facilities and changing needs of the slowly growing community. ■

WORK PLAN | SCHEDULE

WBS	TASK	WEEKS	Start & End Dates
1	Phase 1: Data collection and analysis; community input and site-based planning	20	Sept. 2022 - Jan. 2023
1.1	Determine facility needs associated with 21st Century Model of Education	8	Sept. 2022 - Oct. 2022
1.2	Consider Current Trends in Public School Curricula	8	Oct. 2022- Nov. 2022
1.3	Determine Facility needs of current technology, projected technology purchases, implementation and future trends	6	Oct. 2022 - Nov. 2022
1.4	Demographic Data, District Enrollment Projections & Trends for Facility Needs	6	Oct. 2022 - Nov. 2023
1.5	Examine Deferred Maintenance Assessment, Real Estate Market Analysis, Current Facilities and future facilities needs	12	Oct. 2022 - Dec. 2022
1.6	Review Community Use of Facilities	6	Nov. 2022 - Dec. 2022
1.7	Community Partnerships for District Facility Needs	6	Nov. 2022 - Dec. 2022
1.8	Engage All Stakeholders	20	Sept. 2022 - Jan. 2023
2	Phase 2: Development of Comprehensive Long Range Facilities Master Plan Options, Requirements & Options	20	Feb. 2023 - June 2023
2.1	Articulate proposals for renovations/additions to Existing Facilities	12	Feb. 2023 - April 2023
2.2	Articulate proposals for best practices for new facility construction	12	Feb. 2023 - April 2023
2.3	New Site/Facility Acquisition	12	Feb. 2023 - April 2023
2.4	Sale, Trade, Maintenance, Disposal of Current Facilities	12	Feb. 2023 - April 2023
2.5	Cost /Benefit Assessment of All Facilities Options	8	April 2023 - June 2023
2.6	Sustainability / Energy Conservation Analysis	8	April 2023 - June 2023
2.7	Present Options/Alternatives to Comprehensive Long Range Facilities Master Plan Committee - Preferred Recommendation Selected	1	June 2023
2.8	Present Recommendation for Final Adoption to Board of Trustees	1	June 2023
3	Phase 3: Drafting & Implementation of Comprehensive Long Range Facilities Master Plan	12	July 2023 - Sept. 2023
3.1	Draft Comprehensive Long Range Facilities Master Plan Document & Action Steps	11	July 2023 - Sept. 2023
3.2	Board of Trustees Adoption of Final Comprehensive Long Range Facilities Master Plan Document	1	Sept. 2023
Total		52	Sept. 2022 - Sept. 2023

FACILITIES MASTER PLAN  
SCHEDULE 2022-2024



FACILITIES MASTER PLAN  
SCHEDULE 2022-2024 (CONT.)

JULY	07.20.23 - FOCUS MEETING #1 HSD FACILITIES MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE
AUGUST	08.16.23 - FOCUS MEETING#2 HSD FACILITIES MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE
	08..18.23 - HSD ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE HSD SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS
SEPTEMBER	09.06-07.23 - BOARD OF TRUSTEES UPDATES HSD BOARD OF TRUSTEES
	09.20.23 - HSD FMP MONTHLY PROGRESS MEETING HSD FACILITIES MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE
	09.25.23 - BOARD OF TRUSTEES WORK SESSION HSD BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OCTOBER	10.16.23 - HSD FACILITIES AND CTE MEETING #1 HSD CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION STAFF
	10.17.23 - HSD FMP MONTHLY PROGRESS MEETING HSD FACILITIES MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE
NOVEMBER	11.27.23 - HSD FACILITIES AND CTE MEETING #2 HSD CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION STAFF
	12.19.23 - DEFERRED MAINTENANCE MEETING HSD FACILITIES DEPARTMENT
DECEMBER	12.20.23 - HSD FMP MONTHLY PROGRESS MEETING HSD FACILITIES MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE
JANUARY	01.24 - HSD FMP MONTHLY PROGRESS MEETING HSD FACILITIES MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY	02.12 - FACILITIES AND MAINTENANCE FMP PRESENTATION HSD FACILITIES AND MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE
	02.13 - BOARD OF TRUSTEES FMP PRESENTATION HSD BOARD OF TRUSTEES

2024

PHASE 2

PHASE 3

09.27.23 - KEY STAKEHOLDER MEETING #4  
HSD FMP KEY STAKEHOLDER GROUP



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# **PART 1:** DATA COLLECTION & ANALYSIS; COMMUNITY INPUT & SITE-BASED PLANNING

SECTION 1.1  
FACILITY NEEDS ASSOCIATED WITH 21ST CENTURY MODEL OF EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

All schools were evaluated for educational adequacy to assess how well they support the 21st century model for education and Helena Public Schools programs. This evaluates the functionality of the spaces for meeting the intended use. The schools were reviewed on several factors that included spaces used for direct instruction (e.g. classrooms and specialists), other student use areas (e.g. Gym, Cafeteria), support spaces (e.g. offices), operational spaces (restrooms, hallways, kitchens), and exterior area including drop-off, entry, and play areas.

Most schools have enrollment within the capacity of the building, however the adequacy of the spaces, of the types of spaces to support the programs was often lacking.

SCHOOL DISTRICT FACILITY TOURS

In an effort to review the educational functionality of the school district's existing facilities in person, SMA and NAC toured district facilities over the course of three days, from January 3-5, 2023. Each two person team took one to two hours to walk through each facility with administrators to document and score twelve categories relating to educational adequacy. Review sheets for each facility can be found in Appendix A.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

While the 3 new elementary schools rated highly, the other schools in the district rated poor to fair. The following matrix shows a summary of the ratings in several categories for each school . Spaces were rated on a 1-10 scale with 10 being excellent and 1 being poor. The matrix is also color coded to graphically indicated the ratings.

Common deficiencies that were noted across the district:

- **Drop-off, pick-up and parking was often a significant problem at most sites**, this poses safety concerns for students arriving or leaving the school as well for drivers and pedestrians in the area.
- **Special education facilities were often poor.** The students requiring these services have higher needs and require specialized attention; to support their development, they should have spaces that are conducive for focused learning, unfortunately the Special Education programs were often in less desirable rooms (often with poor acoustics, poor natural light, and sometimes separated from other learning areas).
- **Athletic and Physical Education facilities are not adequate to support the school programs, community use (or attendance).** The middle and high school levels did not have adequate space or facilities to accommodate the PE activities and sports programs.
- **Some schools have poor accessibility such that they are not in compliance with ADA regulations.**
- **Building HVAC and temperature control was a common issue**, with many classrooms in the district such that the conditions are not conducive for learning several days out of the school year.
- **Restrooms** at many facilities are inadequate in number, some are not well located and few are gender inclusive.

More specific descriptions of the functionality of each school is referenced on the matrix below and on the reports in Appendix A. ■

EDUCATIONAL AND FUNCTIONAL ADEQUACY FACILITY MATRIX

FACILITY NAME	2021 ENROLLMENT	ORIGINAL YEAR BUILT	YEAR(S) UPDATED	TOTAL SQ FOOTAGE	OVERALL FUNCTIONAL ADEQUACY	RESTROOMS	ACCESSIBILITY	DROP-OFF/ ARRIVAL/ ACCESS	HALLWAYS/ CIRCULATION	GENERAL CLASSROOMS	STUDENT COLLABORATION SPACE	SPECIAL EDUCATION/ SUPPORT SPACES	SCIENCE CLASSROOMS	GYM/ ATHLETICS/ PE	FOOD SERVICE/ CAFETERIA	CTE CLASSROOMS	ART	MUSIC/ PERFORMANCE	LIBRARY	PLAY AREAS/ PLAY FIELDS
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS																				
BROADWATER	235	1942	42,70,2020	33,566	2.7	3	1	3	2.0	4	2	3	NA	2	2	NA	NA	4	4	6
BRYANT	255	2019		58,869	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	NA	10	10	NA	NA	10	10	9
CENTRAL	291	2019		69,315	9.5	9	10	9	10	10	10	9	NA	10	8	NA	NA	10	9	10
FOUR GEORGIANS	457	1977	2020 (21 roof)	56,948	5.2	4	4	3	3.5	5	4	7	NA	7	5	NA	NA	7	8	7
HAWTHORNE	193	1921	37, 89, 2020	27,261	3.0	3	1	2	4.0	6	2	5	NA	3	3	NA	NA	2	2	6
JEFFERSON	470	1948	70, 2021 2022	34,965	3.6	3	3	4	4	3.5	3	4	NA	3	4	NA	NA	5	3	6
JIM DARCY	269	2019		64,136	8.5	9	9	7	9	9	10	9	NA	8	7	NA	NA	8	9	6
KESSLER	229	1936	48,56,58,64,67,87,2020	24,926	3.0	3	2	5	3	3	2	4	NA	3	2	NA	NA	3	3	6
ROSSITER	419	1936	72, 2020	43,793	4.8	4	4	6	6	5	3	6	NA	5	3	NA	NA	5	6	7
SMITH	269	1966	2020	41,498	6.5	5	7	7	8	6	3	6	NA	8	9	NA	NA	8	5	7
WARREN	307	1968	77, 93, 2020	31,903	3.0	5	7	4	3	3	3	2	NA	2	2	NA	NA	1	1	5
MIDDLE SCHOOLS																				
CR ANDERSON	1056	1959	92, 2020	124,000	4.1	3	4	6	3.0	5	2	1	5	5	2	4	6	4	7	
HELENA	721	1938	86, 2020	162,180	3.4	1	2	4	2.0	3	2	5	3	2	5	4	5	5	4	3
HIGH SCHOOLS																				
CAPITAL	1349	1965	73, 78, 81, 2021	243,400	4.9	5	5	6	4.0	5	3	4	7	5	2	4	6	4	9	
HELENA	1054	1955	62, 81, 97, 2017 (fire), 2021	237,550	4.5	3	5	4	3.0	6	2	5	8	5	4	7	4	2		8
FRONT STREET LEARNING CENTER - PAL	66	1957	90	15,550	4.9	5	8	8	6.0	3	2	NA	2	NA	5	NA	5	NA	NA	4
OTHER DISTRICT FACILITIES																				
RAY BJORK LEARNING CENTER		1959	62, 20, 2021	22,294	6.5	8	1	7	3.0	7	2	7	NA	10	10	NA	NA	9	8	8
LINCOLN CENTER		1946	56, 60, 2021	18,780	5.5	5	1	8	8.0	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
DISTRICT FACILITIES		2019		12,490	8.3	10	10	5	8.0	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
MAY BUTLER CENTER		1942		9,800	2.5	2	2	3	3.0	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
7TH AVENUE GYM		1908		9,800	2.0	2	2	2	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	2	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
CENTRAL KITCHEN (at Capital HS)					2.4	3	2	2	3	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	2	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
VIGILANTE STADIUM (At Helena MS)					3.3	3	4	3	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	3	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
LEGEND																				
EAST SIDE																				
WEST SIDE																				

LEGEND	
9	EXCELLENT
8	
7	
6	GOOD
5	
4	FAIR
3	
2	DEFICIENT
1	
	POOR

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FACILITY SITE ANALYSIS MATRIX

FACILITY NAME					FACILITY SITE ANALYSIS							
					OVERALL SITE ADEQUACY	SITE SIZE ADEQUACY	VEHICULAR ACCESS & PARKING	SITE ACCESSIBILITY	DROP-OFF/ ARRIVAL/ ACCESS	PLAY AREAS/ PLAY FIELDS	POTENTIAL FOR ADDITION	POTENTIAL FOR ONSITE REPLACEMENT
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS												
BROADWATER	235	1942	42,70,2020	33,566	3.1	2	3	1	3	7	2	4
BRYANT	255	2019		58,869	8.6	4	10	10	10	9	NA	NA
CENTRAL	291	2019		69,315	8.2	4	9	9	9	10	NA	NA
FOUR GEORGIANS	457	1977	2020 (21 roof)	56,948	4.8	7	4	4	3	7	3.5	5
HAWTHORNE	193	1921	37, 89, 2020	27,261	3.6	1	3	3	2	6	4	6
JEFFERSON	470	1948	70, 2021 2022	34,965	3.9	4	3	3	4	6	4	3
JIM DARCY	269	2019		64,136	8.2	8	10	10	7	6	NA	NA
KESSLER	229	1936	48,56,58,64,67,87,2020	24,926	5.0	6	3	4	5	6	3	8
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WARREN	307	1968	77, 93, 2020	31,903	7.0	10	5	8	5	5	8	8
MIDDLE SCHOOLS												
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HIGH SCHOOLS												
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HELENA	1054	1955	62, 81, 97, 2017 (fire), 2021	237,550	4.6	3	3	5	4	8	3	6
FRONT STREET LEARNING CENTER - PAL	66	1957	90	15,550	5.6	5	5	8	8	4	6	3
OTHER DISTRICT FACILITIES												
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7TH AVENUE GYM		1908		9,800	2.0	2	2	2	2	NA	NA	NA
CENTRAL KITCHEN (at Capital HS)					2.6	3	3	2	2	NA	3	NA
VIGILANTE STADIUM (At Helena MS)					3.3	3	3	4	3	NA	NA	NA
LEGEND												
EAST SIDE												
WEST SIDE												

LEGEND

9

EXCELLENT

8

7

GOOD

6

5

FAIR

4

3

DEFICIENT

2

1

POOR

ELEMENTARY NEEDS

Except for the 3 new elementary schools, an added multi-purpose room was a high priory for all other elementary. Currently, the Lack of separate gym and commons creates daily functional challenges for conversion of space (tables, equipment, clean up) and scheduling. Added space would also benefit larger events and community activities.

Hawthorne, Broadwater, Smith, Warren, Jefferson, and Kessler share similar deficiencies including:

- **Poor ADA accessibility**, this is particularly an issue at Broadwater, Hawthorne, Jefferson, and Kessler.
- **Poor HVAC and temperature control**, this was an issue at all the elementary schools except the 3 new buildings and Jefferson, which was recently upgraded. (poor temperature control that leads to uncomfortable and ineffective learning environments, some rooms have high sound level that detract from listening and discerning sounds, words and tones).
- **Undersized classrooms** this is particularly an issue at Broadwater, Jefferson, Kessler, and Warren.
- **Lack of informal/ shared breakout space for WIN groups, small groups, collaboration, and other informal small group and independent learning.** Appropriate space was lacking at all of the elementary schools except for the 3 new elementary buildings.
- **Kitchens are undersized**, this is particularly an issue at Broadwater, Hawthorne, Jefferson, Kessler, Rossiter, and Warren.



Broadwater Elementary Circulation



Warren Elementary Gym and Commons





CR Anderson Middle School Circulation



Helena Middle School Gymnasium

## MIDDLE SCHOOL NEEDS

- **Parking, Drop-off/ pick-up**
- **Special Education spaces are not conducive for needs of the programs and the needs of the students.** Some program are located in poor quality classrooms with no windows, some are located in general classrooms that are not sized adequately for the programs. No proper spaces for therapy (use storage rooms).
- **Accessibility**
- **Poor Hallways / internal circulation** – Hallways are very congested, lockers in hallways exacerbate congestion. Circulation at CR Anderson between academic areas and the lunch room is particularly pinched.
- **Inadequate power outlets / distribution in general,** particularly at classroom spaces
- **Career Technical Education (CTE) spaces and equipment reduce quality of programs intended to be offered.**
- **Lunchroom at CR Anderson is undersized,** in a poor location with very inadequate kitchen facilities
- **Gym / Athletic spaces are too small for programs and uses, particularly at HMS.** Locker room and support spaces are poor, these are also used for HS events at HMS.
- **Student restrooms are in poor condition, several do not have proper accessibility.** Typically are area of high behavior issues.

## HIGH SCHOOL NEEDS

- **Athletics** – Athletic facilities are below the standards of AA schools statewide. This is limited the district's ability to facilitate hosting championship events and affects practice scheduling and facility rental.
- **Career Technical Education (CTE)** - Current CTE facilities are distributed among both high schools requiring duplicate programs, equipment, etc. It was also noted that CTE facilities at both high schools are aging, utilities are limiting expansion of upgrade of programs and the building construction does not meet current code.
- **Special Education** - It was noted at both high schools that lack of space is limiting Special Education services. Most of the spaces currently utilized for special education are not designed for those functions.
- **Safety and Security** - It was noted that the high school facilities are not up to the standards established with the safety and security upgrades that were completed at the elementary and middle schools.



Capital High School Classroom



Capital High School Special Education Classroom



Helena High School Main Entrance



Helena High School Gymnasium



## SECTION 1.2

### CURRENT TRENDS IN PUBLIC SCHOOL CURRICULA

#### INTRODUCTION

- State and Federal Requirements
- 21st Century Model of Education
- Increasing Special Education and intervention needs
- Increasing mental health needs among students
- Increasing challenges of teacher support and retention (teacher mental health)
- Schools having a larger role in the support of equity issues, family needs (food, clothing, supplies)
- Hands on learning – project based, exploration
- WIN programs and variable re-grouping of students beyond the standard set classroom

#### CURRENT AND FUTURE DISTRICT CURRICULUM

See Summary of District Curriculum Meeting (See Appendix C).

##### Elementary Educational Model:

- Collaboration and small group activities are identified as an important aspect of the Helena Elementary curriculum, spaces outside of the classroom are needed to accommodate this.
- Uses WIN (What I Need) periods that re-groups students from different classroom to provide small groups of common proficiency in a given subject. The pods and shared areas at the 3 new elementary schools support this well.
- Moving to more of a push-in model for support of specific needs per IEP.
- Increasing specialists need office and meeting spaces and adequate space in the classroom for differentiated learning.



Shared Space, Central Elementary School



CTE, East Helena High School

##### Middle and High School Educational Model:

- Curriculum standards for social studies and science are based on an inquiry model. Facilities don't support the collaborative work.
- Some programs run integrated classes (e.g. English and History) - pairing of classrooms is beneficial for this.
- CTE learning is an import part of the curriculum – new statewide standards will emphasize CTE more.
  - CTE facilities often do not support current Shop spaces, modern technology and current real life skills.
  - Consideration for central skills center - has benefit of pooling resources. Separately there are benefits of having CTE programs integrated more closely with rest of academic curriculum.
- Developing a sense of community and school pride within the school; having space for all school assemblies, community events and large scale activities that help build community.



## SECTION 1.3

### FACILITY NEEDS OF CURRENT TECHNOLOGY, PROJECTED TECHNOLOGY PURCHASES, IMPLEMENTATION AND FUTURE TRENDS

#### INTRODUCTION

##### TECHNOLOGY & 21ST CENTURY LEARNING

- The increases in communication and collaboration that are core to 21st Century learning are facilitated by technology. The District's 1:1 technology program is a significant part of this, but upcoming advances enabling new ways for students to work together will continue to push technological boundaries, as will methods for teachers to review and interact with student work.
- District-provided 1:1 devices have been shown to decrease the achievement gap and to help teachers differentiate instruction to meet students' needs.
- Classroom technology needs to not only allow students to receive content, but also to cast content from their device to a shared screen for presentation and interactively participate in both small and large groups.
- To be effective, new technology needs to be paired with robust teacher training programs.

##### CURRENT AND FUTURE TECHNOLOGY NEEDS

- Summary of District Technology Meeting (Reference Meeting Notes in Appendix C)
- Current and Future Technology Trends
  - Flexibility is the key.
  - Moving toward cloud-based services instead of on-site.
- The District had a technology plan prior to COVID that was to be updated. COVID created a shift to mobile technology, laptops instead of desktop computers.
- Student technology: Chromebook on a 5-year replacement cycle (potentially 6). The District has 1:1 technology currently, but will need to pass a technology levy to continue 1:1. High School share the top priority, then middle schools, then elementary. The Master Plan should reflect this goal of continuing 1:1.
- Technology maintenance and licensing need to be addressed and how that relates to fiscal and administrative departments. Technology levies need to be considered.
- Energy conservation strategies can include LED lighting and occupancy sensors and integrated controls.



Tech Stair, Bellevue High School

##### SUMMARY OF TECHNOLOGY NEEDS

- Overall District Needs
  - The process for procurement of equipment and systems should be streamlined to make supporting technology easier.
  - Educational technology includes presentation equipment: An optimal classroom will include either an interactive projector or touch panel display and a document camera. Consistency across the District is desired.
  - WAPs need to be provided at all facilities support student technology. A WAP is needed at each classroom and WAP locations should be accessible (not above ceilings). There are currently no exterior WAPs, but these have been requested at HHS concessions.
  - Distance learning can be accommodated by classrooms that can be broadcast out, using integrated camera and microphone systems. This would likely be one or two classrooms per facility. For new classrooms constructed, it is worth providing infrastructure for future distance learning programs.
- Safety and security is undergoing upgrades with prior bond funding, including cameras and access control. An external consultant's recommendations will be forthcoming. We will need to review the recommendations and determine how they will be incorporated into the Master Plan. Potential use of Raptor system for visitor check-in and a future goal for student check-in.
- For new construction and renovations, consider power locations and capacity. Are there ways to charge all devices without a cart? Look at options for charging stations; these need to be adaptable to changing technology.

## SECTION 1.4

### DEMOGRAPHIC DATA, DISTRICT ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS & TRENDS FOR FACILITY NEEDS

#### ELEMENTARY NEEDS

- Network connections in the new elementary schools are good.
- No external cameras as District policy.
- Standardize technology for flexible use.

#### MIDDLE SCHOOL NEEDS

- Middle and High Schools need new networking cabinets and cabling as a priority.
- Speaker deployment at Helena MS is good, with hall and room clock-speakers. CR Anderson does not have hallway coverage.

#### HIGH SCHOOL NEEDS

- Upcoming safety and security recommendations for high schools will likely include a future bond to match what is currently happening at elementary and middle schools. Main entry vestibules with 3 layers of doors. This will be complicated at the larger high school buildings, but is a high priority.
- The Shops building at Helena HS has different infrastructure needs; need more connectivity for CNC machines and 3D printers.

#### INTRODUCTION

##### DEMOGRAPHIC IMPACTS ON MASTER PLANNING

- An understanding of Helena School District demographics and enrollment data is an important consideration in determining the facility needs to be evaluated during the master plan process. The design team has reviewed the demographic and enrollment data provided by the district, both historic and projected, in order to understand those impacts on Helena Public School current facilities and future needs.
- Overall the district has shown general stability in the total enrollment and information provided indicates that will continue

##### DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

An overview of the demographic information provided shows that the district's population has shown consistent, slow growth compared to other similar districts in Montana. The district's consistent demographic profile is reflected in the historic and projected district enrollment. Over the last 20 years, the overall district enrollment has ranged from a high of 8090 students in 2002 to a low of 7627 students in 2022. Overall, the year-to-year change in overall enrollment has been relatively minor with the exception of 2019 and 2020 which coincided with the opening of the new East Helena High School resulting in a declining enrollment at the high school level and primarily effecting Helena High School. It is anticipated that the overall enrollment numbers will continue to be consistent moving forward based on future enrollment projections provided.

(See table on page 1.11 for projections)

While the overall district enrollment is anticipated to remain consistent, the specific enrollment at each facility will be analyzed during the master planning effort in order to anticipate and plan for potential changes to the distribution of the student population.

The following demographic and enrollment considerations will be evaluated during Comprehensive Facilities Master Plan:

**Overall District Impacts:** The demographic and enrollment information evaluated during Phase 1 of this report do not indicate a significant impact to the overall district enrollment in the future. However, the Master Plan should account for flexibility in the future facilities to respond to enrollment fluctuations. The Master Plan will also evaluate changing district demographic needs in particular populations of need including special education, behavioral and mental health and homelessness.

**Elementary School Impacts:** Current demographic and future enrollment projections indicate that there may be shift in elementary enrollment from the west-side elementary schools to the east side. The Master Plan will evaluate projected enrollment distribution among the elementary schools and explore various options to evenly distribute the student population among the elementary schools. As options for new construction, replacement and additions are evaluated, the enrollment projections will be evaluated to consider the most efficient size and number of schools to address the enrollment needs.



Middle School Impacts: Enrollment projections at the middle school level will be evaluated to determine the appropriate distribution of the student population among current and future middle school facilities. The current enrollment at both C.R. Anderson (1065) and Helena Middle School (689) are beyond the desired enrollment. The Master Plan will evaluate the current facilities' ability to accommodate the projected enrollment and the potential for new facilities to better respond to the middle school population within the district.

High School Impacts: The opening of East Helena High School in 2020 resulted in a significant reduction in enrollment at the high school level and in particular at Helena High School. The Facilities Master Plan will evaluate the distribution of the district's projected high school enrollment as part of any proposed new construction, replacement or additions to the high schools. ■

Fall Student Count Summary (Not ANB)

	10/7/2002	10/6/2003	10/4/2004	10/3/2005	10/2/2006	10/1/2007	10/3/2008	10/5/2009	10/4/2010	10/3/2011	10/1/2012	10/7/2013	10/2/2014	10/8/2015	10/3/2016	10/6/2017	10/5/2018	10/4/2019	10/5/2020	10/4/2021	Fall 2022	Fall 2023	Fall 2024	Fall 2025	Fall 2026	Fall 2027	Fall 2028	Fall 2029	Fall 2030	Fall 2031	Fall 2032	Fall 2034	Fall 2035
Kindergarten	497	497	495	540	545	533	552	558	578	543	572	600	575	542	583	539	581	597	529	604	590	590	590	590	590	590	590	590	590	590	590	590	590
First Grade	577	509	505	500	550	594	547	541	562	576	551	572	606	548	558	577	551	585	571	559	604	590	590	590	590	590	590	590	590	590	590	590	590
Second Grade	531	565	494	524	526	519	580	549	545	539	560	540	570	567	573	569	586	545	563	587	559	604	590	590	590	590	590	590	590	590	590	590	590
Third Grade	546	552	567	498	526	537	552	571	558	547	538	567	534	531	609	584	558	600	525	562	587	559	604	590	590	590	590	590	590	590	590	590	590
Fourth Grade	530	553	563	577	519	529	551	559	566	542	543	554	565	509	569	610	616	578	588	524	562	587	559	604	590	590	590	590	590	590	590	590	590
Fifth Grade	587	535	559	572	587	520	544	550	562	576	536	551	553	535	550	563	635	609	560	593	524	562	559	604	590	590	590	590	590	590	590	590	590
Sixth Grade	575	588	560	550	579	603	518	552	556	559	578	550	562	542	572	545	579	652	617	564	593	524	562	587	559	604	590	590	590	590	590	590	590
Seventh Grade	575	595	593	574	547	594	604	541	562	567	567	582	551	559	567	571	533	579	629	611	564	593	524	562	587	559	604	590	590	590	590	590	590
Eighth Grade	602	593	594	609	577	563	585	604	522	567	565	571	591	550	571	559	575	555	575	621	611	564	593	524	562	587	559	604	590	590	590	590	590
Ninth Grade	781	791	778	800	793	768	751	789	814	731	770	761	722	782	732	752	740	648	616	644	661	651	604	633	564	602	627	599	644	630	630	630	630
Tenth Grade	767	801	780	769	793	797	759	747	781	811	728	769	766	711	792	739	757	711	640	630	634	651	641	594	623	554	592	617	589	634	620	620	620
Eleventh Grade	765	750	753	728	748	733	747	796	706	750	772	683	724	723	693	752	688	719	691	588	590	594	611	601	554	583	514	552	577	549	594	580	580
Twelfth Grade	757	755	736	751	726	703	691	750	694	668	710	728	646	675	677	637	689	620	682	607	548	550	554	571	561	514	543	474	512	537	509	554	540
Total Enrollment	8090	8084	7977	7992	8016	7993	7981	8107	8006	7976	7990	8028	7965	7774	8046	7997	8088	7998	7786	7694	7627	7619	7609	7595	7564	7543	7569	7566	7632	7660	7663	7694	7680

	10/7/2002	10/6/2003	10/4/2004	10/3/2005	10/2/2006	10/1/2007	10/3/2008	10/5/2009	10/4/2010	10/3/2011	10/1/2012	10/7/2013	10/3/2014	10/8/2015	10/3/2016	10/6/2017	10/5/2018	10/4/2019	10/5/2020	10/4/2021	Fall 2022	Fall 2023	Fall 2024	Fall 2025	Fall 2026	Fall 2027	Fall 2028	Fall 2029	Fall 2030	Fall 2031	Fall 2032	Fall 2034	Fall 2035
Grades K to 5	3268	3211	3183	3211	3253	3232	3326	3328	3371	3323	3300	3384	3403	3232	3442	3442	3527	3514	3336	3429	3426	3492	3520	3523	3554	3540	3540	3540	3540	3540	3540	3540	3540
Grades 6 to 8	1752	1776	1747	1733	1703	1760	1707	1697	1640	1693	1710	1703	1704	1651	1710	1675	1687	1786	1821	1796	1768	1681	1679	1673	1708	1750	1753	1784	1770	1770	1770	1770	1770
Grades 9 to 12	3070	3097	3047	3048	3060	3001	2948	3082	2995	2960	2980	2941	2858	2891	2894	2880	2874	2698	2629	2469	2433	2446	2410	2399	2302	2253	2276	2242	2322	2350	2353	2384	2370
Totals	8090	8084	7977	7992	8016	7993	7981	8107	8006	7976	7990	8028	7965	7774	8046	7997	8088	7998	7786	7694	7627	7619	7609	7595	7564	7543	7569	7566	7632	7660	7663	7694	7680

Notes:  
\*Fall of 2022 signifies the first year of full East Helena High School implementation for all grade levels.  
\*Projections do not take into consideration population growth factors  
\*Projections follow patterns from the previous enrollment year  
\*Projections estimate 590 student incoming Kindergarten classes  
\*High School Projections consider out of boundary typical requests  
\*High School Projections consider class to class shrinkage

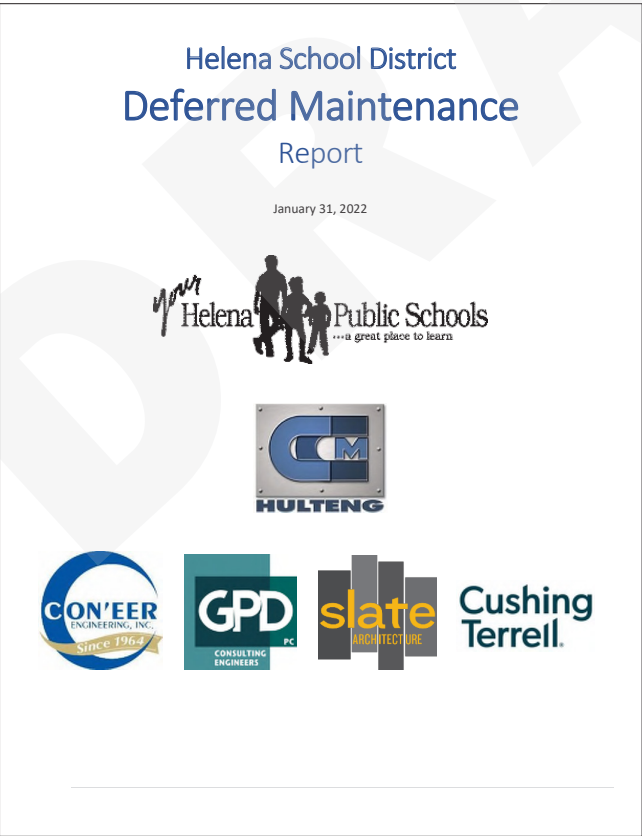
SECTION 1.5

DEFERRED MAINTENANCE ASSESSMENT, REAL ESTATE MARKET ANALYSIS

DEFERRED MAINTENANCE BACKGROUND

In January of 2022 a Deferred Maintenance Report commissioned by the school district was completed. The report included narrative and probable cost information in a number of categories including mechanical, plumbing, electrical, lighting, building envelope, windows, doors, roofing accessibility, and site conditions at each school. The deficiencies addressed in the report were organized into high, medium and low priority. The report identified over \$88 million dollars in deferred maintenance items that needs to be addressed, with \$36 million being high priority items. Since the report was issued, Helena Public School Facilities has identified and developed a plan to address the highest priority needs within their current facilities and maintenance budget. See Appendix D for the full Deferred Maintenance Report.

During Phase 1 of the Master Plan our team met with the district facilities department to review the status of the deferred maintenance items and overall facilities and maintenance concerns related to the Master Planning process. It was emphasized that maintenance of current and potential new facilities from as staffing and funding standpoint must be considered. The development of design standards and regular replacement schedules of major building systems to be implemented as part of any improvements resulting from the Master Plan is critical to the future maintenance and sustainability of facilities.



As the Facilities Master Plan is developed, the deferred maintenance items identified at each school will be considered as part of the evaluation for replacement, renovation or addition at each facility. The overall cost of addressing the deferred maintenance items versus the potential replacement cost will be evaluated as part of the overall assessment for each school. As Master Plan scenarios are developed, the potential for funding improvements or replacements from the Building Reserve Fund or from potential capital campaigns will be considered.

All current district properties, including the May Butler Center, Front Street Learning Center and 7th Avenue Gym will be considered as part of the Facilities Master Plan. Utility and Maintenance, renovation or potential sale costs will be evaluated to determine the best long-term benefit of these facilities to the district.

BUILDING CONDITION MATRIX OF MAJOR BUILDING SYSTEMS

FACILITY NAME	2021 ENROLLMENT	ORIGINAL YEAR BUILT	YEAR(S) UPDATED	TOTAL SQ FOOTAGE		OVERALL BUILDING CONDITION	SITE   PARKING, PLAYGROUND SURFACES, SIDEWALK REPAIR	HVAC SYSTEMS	PLUMBING SYSTEMS	FIRE SUPPRESSION SYSTEM	CONTROL SYSTEMS	ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS	SAFETY AND SECURITY SYSTEM	WINDOWS	DOORS	EXTERIOR ENVELOPE	ROOF	ACCESSIBILITY
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS																		
BROADWATER	235	1942	42,70,2020	33,566		3.7	2.5	4	4	10.0	4	2.5	4	5	1	1	NA	2.5
BRYANT	255	2019		58,869		10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
CENTRAL	291	2019		69,315		10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
FOUR GEORGIANS	457	1977	2020 (21 roof)	56,948		4.7	4	2.5	4	1	4	2.5	4	10	2.5	5	10	7
HAWTHORNE	193	1921	37, 89, 2020	27,261		3.5	4	4	7	1.0	2.5	2.5	4	4	4	2.5	4	2.5
JEFFERSON	470	1948	70, 2021 2022	34,965		5.6	4	4	1	1	10	4	4	7	7	10	NA	10
JIM DARCY	269	2019		64,136		10.0	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
KESSLER	229	1936	48,56,58,64,67,87,2020	24,926		3.4	5	4	4	1	2.5	2.5	2.5	4	1	2.5	5	7
ROSSITER	419	1936	72, 2020	43,793		3.3	2.5	2.5	4	1	2.5	2.5	2.5	7	1	2.5	7	4
SMITH	269	1966	2020	41,498		3.4	2.5	2.5	2.5	1	4	2.5	2.5	4	10	1	7	1
WARREN	307	1968	77, 93, 2020	31,903		2.5	2.5	2.5	4	1	2.5	2.5	4	2.5	1	1	2.5	4
MIDDLE SCHOOLS																		
CR ANDERSON	1056	1959	92, 2020	124,000		3.5	4	4	4	10.0	2.5	2.5	4	4	1	2.5	2.5	1
HELENA	721	1938	86, 2020	162,180		3.6	4	2.5	4	1.0	2.5	2.5	4	2.5	4	4	2.5	10
HIGH SCHOOLS																		
CAPITAL	1349	1965	73, 78, 81, 2021	243,400		2.8	2.5	2.5	4	1.0	1	2.5	1	4	1	7	2.5	4
HELENA	1054	1955	62, 81, 97, xx(fire), 2021	237,550		2.1	2.5	1	1	1.0	1	2.5	1	1	2.5	2.5	2.5	7
FRONT STREET LEARNING CENTER - PAL	66	1957	90	15,550		3.1	4	2.5	4	1.0	4	2.5	1	10	1	4	1	2.5
OTHER FACILITIES																		
RAY BJORK LEARNING CENTER		1959	62, 20, 2021	22,294		4.6	4	2.5	4	1.0	2.5	2.5	4	10	10	7	7	1
LINCOLN CENTER		1946	56, 60, 2021	18,780		5.5	4	10	10	10.0	10	2.5	4	4	1	4	NA	1
DISTRICT FACILITIES		2019		12,490		7.3	2.5	2.5	2.5	5.0	10	NA	10	10	10	10	NA	10
MAY BUTLER CENTER		1942		9,800		2.8	4	4	2.5	5.0	2.5	4	1	1	2.5	4	1	2.5
7TH AVENUE GYM		1908		9,800		3.4	10	5	2.5	5.0	2.5	4	2.5	1	2.5	1	NA	1
CENTRAL KITCHEN (at Capital HS)																		
VIGILANTE STADIUM (At Helena MS)						7.7	10	10	10	NA	10	7	4	NA	1	7	NA	10
LEGEND																		
EAST SIDE																		
WEST SIDE																		

LEGEND

9

EXCELLENT

8

7

GOOD

6

5

FAIR

4

3

DEFICIENT

2

1

POOR

SECTION 1.6

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS FOR DISTRICT FACILITY NEEDS

INTRODUCTION

KEY COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Helena Public Schools is surrounded by an incredible network of community partnerships, industries and institutions that currently support the School District. As our team looks to the future plans for Helena School District, we must understand what community partnerships currently exist. The Key Stakeholder Meetings, as part of Phase 1, have been the first step in engaging with possible groups to either strengthen existing partnerships, or establish future ones.

Partnerships that can continue to enhance Helena Public Schools' already robust academic and extracurricular offerings will be an important next step for creating a comprehensive Facilities Master Plan. Current and future organizations that can bolster the School District's offerings include: athletic facilities and organizations; healthcare or mental health programs; higher education institutions; industry partners; and before and after school care providers.

Many of these groups were represented at the Key Stakeholder Group Meetings during Phase 1 and will continue to be engaged throughout the master planning process. Further investigation will be required to understand the nature of the partnerships and how they can be further enhanced or engaged.

KEY STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

Summary of Meetings (Reference Meeting Notes in Appendix C)

Helena Public Schools are a central to the Helena Community. Our schools are critical to the educational, social, recreational and economic future of Helena. As such, it is important that the Master Planning effort reach out to the district's community partners to identify opportunities for the facility master plan to strengthen community partnerships and support the well being of our community as a whole.

The district's current and potential community partners are numerous and varied. For the sake of our Phase 1 Master Plan efforts, we have identified five general groups that will be engaged for input and identifying areas of collaboration and partnership for determine the highest community use of district facilities moving forward:

- Healthcare and Mental Health Partners
- Higher Education Institutions
- Recreational and Athletic Programs
- Industry and Business Partners
- Before and After School Care Partners

During Phase 1 of the Master Plan our team worked with the district Facilities and Maintenance committee to identify a group of community members that represented these various groups. We established a Key Stakeholders Group and conducted four meetings to introduce the Facilities Master Plan and gain input on the greatest needs of the current facilities and how the Master Plan can best address those needs and enhance the district's role in the success of our vibrant community. The presentations and notes from the Key Stakeholder meetings are include in Appendix C of this document.



SECTION 1.7

ENGAGE ALL STAKEHOLDERS

SUMMARY OF STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Throughout the Facilities Master Planning process, a group of key community stakeholders, referred to as the Key Stakeholder Group, was engaged. This group is composed of individuals representing a cross-section of Helena’s community: healthcare, business, higher education, non-profits, athletics and school administrators. During Phase 1, the Key Stakeholder Group convened twice to focus on high-level discussions centered around the overall process of the master plan and developing the future vision of Helena Public Schools. Notes from these meetings can be referenced in Appendix C.

PHASE 1 SURVEYS

During Phase 1 of the Facilities Master Planning process, our team intended to survey large groups. Four survey groups were surveyed: Staff, District Board and Administration, Students, and the Helena Community. The survey was open for two weeks from March 13 through March 24, 2023. 644 responded to the Community Survey, 630 responded to the Student Survey, 14 to the Board and District Administration Survey, and 241 responded to the Staff Survey. Full reports and graphs of the survey results can be found in Appendix B. The following are short summaries of findings from each survey group. Readers are encouraged to view the full results and full results and detailed nuance within each question within the Appendix.

APPENDIX CONTENTS

COMMUNITY SURVEY.....B.4

STAFF SURVEYS.....B.101

BOARD & DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION SURVEY.....B.400

STUDENT SURVEYS.....B.418

COMMUNITY SURVEY

During the two week span the Community Survey was open, 644 respondents completed the survey. Over 90% of the respondents were parents of current, future or past students. Generally speaking, response rate is higher among groups that have a closer connection to the schools. This is important information to keep in mind when thinking about the broader community as a whole, and is only a reflection of a group that has closer ties and likely more familiarity with Helena School District.

When asked to rate the opinion of Helena School District’s facilities and their ability to support educational delivery, on a scale of 5 to 1 (with 5 being Excellent and 1 being Very Poor), the weighted average score was as follows, with the High School scoring the poorest overall:

- Elementary Facilities (Grades PK-5): 2.98 (Poor)
- Middle School Facilities (Grades 6-8): 2.78 (Poor)
- High School Facilities (Grades 9-12): 2.75 (Poor)

In regards to how the community perceives how Helena Schools is meeting 21st Century Education principals in their facilities, most categories scored average, while Special Education scored N/A.

Next, the community was asked what they felt was unique about existing facilities and should not be changed. The most common theme was “Nothing”, or open to change. Another common theme was the small school feel, easy access to schools, and neighborhood type schools. When asked what should be changed, modernizing facilities was the most common theme, with space and enrollment accommodations and high school needs coming in as second most common comment.

When asked what the School District should focus on in the coming 5, 10 and 15 years, respondents felt that the focus should be foremost on academics, followed by safety and security and then CTE/VOTEC.

Top additional comments as they pertain to the master plan were high school needs, boundaries/redistricting/consolidation and in third, middle school needs.

STAFF SURVEYS

Staff Survey summaries have been provided in the Appendix Part B, separated by each school.

Questions 4 and 5 also show a weighted average for each question to show comparison school by school and comparison by levels (elementary, middle and high school).

Question 4: Facility’s Overall Rating at Supporting Educational Delivery

5.0-3.0 (EXCELLENT TO AVERAGE):

- |                      |                        |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| • Bryant Elementary  | • Jefferson Elementary |
| • Central Elementary | • Jim Darcy Elementary |

3.0-1.0 (AVERAGE TO VERY POOR):

- |                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| • Broadwater Elementary     | • Helena Middle School                   |
| • Four Georgians Elementary | • Capital High School                    |
| • Hawthorne Elementary      | • Helena High School                     |
| • Kessler Elementary        | • Project for Alternative Learning (PAL) |
| • Rossiter Elementary       | • May Butler Center                      |
| • Warren Elementary         | • Ray Bjork Center                       |
| • CR Anderson Middle School |  |

**Question 5: Faculty’s Ability to Meet 21st Century Learning Principals**

**5.0-3.0 (EXCELLENT TO AVERAGE):**

Bryant Elementary  
Central Elementary  
Hawthorne Elementary  
Jim Darcy Elementary  
Jefferson Elementary  
Warren Elementary  
Ray Bjork Center

**3.0-1.0 (AVERAGE TO VERY POOR):**

Broadwater Elementary  
Four Georgians Elementary  
Kessler Elementary  
Rossiter Elementary  
Smith Elementary  
CR Anderson Middle School  
Helena Middle School  
Capital High School  
Helena High School  
Project for Alternative Learning (PAL)  
May Butler Center

**BOARD & DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION SURVEYS**

Of the responses to the Board and District Administration Survey, the following summarizes the responses:

- Overall Facilities’ Ability to Meet Current Educational Trends and Needs was average, while the future ability was poor.
- Overall Technology was Average.
- Safety and Security ranged from Good to Average.
- Sports and Athletics Facilities rated Very Poor.
- Community Use Areas ranged from Average to Poor.
- Career & Technical Education (VOTEC/CTE) Facilities were Average.
- Fine & Performing Arts Facilities were Good to Average.
- STEM/STEAM Facilities were Average.

The rating for the current practice of 21st Century Learning principles in the facilities was largely Good or Average, while Community Use and Spaces that Support Mental & Physical Health were Poor. Respondents cited the aging facilities and budget/funding as the biggest challenges currently facing the District. When

asked about the future of the District, High School needs and 21st Century Learning were common themes. Most respondents felt that the facilities are not competitive when referring to teacher and staff retention and recruitment, and felt that the Helena Schools needs to expand facilities to meet current Montana Department of Commerce growth projections.

**STUDENT SURVEYS**

630 students from all schools responded. Of those, students from Bryant, Hawthorne, and Jim Darcy Elementary School, CR Anderson and Helena Middle School, and Capital and Helena High School were represented. Surveys from students that did not provide a valid District email address were removed. The following is a summary of their responses, separated by school. The full summaries can be found in Appendix B.

**Bryant Elementary**

Students feel most proud of the gymnasium, classes and programs, and performing arts and arts. In general, students felt safe, welcomed, supported, and that the building supported their ability to learn.

**Hawthorne Elementary**

Hawthorne students felt most proud of their teachers and staff, community support and engagement, and performing arts and art programs. Students also felt safe and support, but were equally mixed on the school being a welcoming place. All students felt that the building supported their ability to learn.

**Jim Darcy**

Jim Darcy students cited the teachers and staff, playgrounds, classrooms, and friends and students as something they were most proud of in their building. All students that responded felt safe, welcomed, supported, and supported in their ability to learn.

**CR Anderson Middle School**

Student respondents at CR Anderson Middle School noted the bathrooms and maintenance/modernization as a frequent need when asked what their least favorite thing was about the school’s building. Students were most proud of their fellow friends and students, teachers and staff and the gymnasium. In general, most students felt safe, supported, welcomed and supported in their ability to learn.

**Helena Middle School**

Helena Middle School students commonly cited the Athletic/P.E. facilities, Fine & Performing Arts areas, and Teachers/Staff as their favorite thing about the building. Bathrooms and modernization and maintenance needs were the least favorite themes listed about the school. The majority of students that responded felt safe, supported, welcomed, and that the building supported their ability to learn.

**Capital High School**

Of the Capital High School students that responded to the survey, students liked the layout of the building and the teachers and staff. Bathrooms, and modernization or maintenance needs were among the most commonly

cited for the least favorite items about the school's building. Most students felt safe and welcoming, that the school offered programs and spaces to support good health, and the building supported their ability to learn.

### **Helena High School**

Helena High School students noted that their favorite thing about the school were the Athletics/P.E. facilities, while modernization and maintenance needs were the top mention for the least favorite thing. 63% of HHS students felt safe, while 36% did not feel safe in the building and 61% felt welcomed, while 38% did not. Most students felt that the school offered spaces and programs to support good health, but was not an overwhelming number that felt the building supported their ability to learn.

### **Project for Alternative Learning (PAL)**

Students at Project for Alternative Learning (PAL) that responded to the survey mentioned the teachers and staff as their favorite thing, and would never want to change the classes and programs or school community. Similar to the other schools, bathrooms and modernization or maintenance needs were among the least favorite. Most students felt safe at the school, and all students felt that the school provided spaces and programs to support good health, felt welcoming, and supported their ability to learn.