



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, May 21st, 2024

3:30 p.m. Tour of PAL followed by
Business & TEAMS Portion of the Meeting at 4:00 p.m.

MINUTES

ATTENDEES

<i>Trustees</i>	<i>Others</i>
Siobhan Hathhorn, Board Chair	Rex Weltz, Superintendent
Jennifer McKee, Vice Chair	Janelle Mickelson, Business Manager
Linda Cleatus, Trustee	Josh McKay, Assistant Superintendent
Rachel Robison, Trustee	Keri Mizell, Human Resources Director
Kay Satre, Trustee	Candice Delvaux, Executive Assistant
Jennifer Walsh, Trustee	Gary Myers, Director of Educational Technology
Terry Beaver, Trustee	Rich Franco, Human Resources Benefits Manager
	Jane Shawn, HEA President
	Matthew Carey, PAL Principal
	Lisa Cordingley, HEF Director
	Jason Russel, Secure Environment Consultants
	Karen Ogden, Communications Officer
	Barb Ridgway, Chief of Staff
	Todd Verrill, Facilities Director
	Lona Carter, Student Health
	Kaitlyn Hess, Assessment & Federal Programs
	Tim McMahon, Activities Director
	Several Guests of the Public
	Several HSD Staff Members
	Several PAL Staff Members
	Several PAL Students

I. CALL TO ORDER/ PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. REVIEW OF AGENDA

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn reviewed the agenda with the Board of Trustees and noted there was one change. *Item for Information 1. Secure Environment Consultants-Jason Russell* will now become *Item for Information 2*, and *Health Benefits Committee Plan Changes Update-Rich Franco* will become *Item for Information 1*.

The Board of Trustees moved on to General Public Comment.

III. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no general public comment.

The Board of Trustees moved on to view a presentation given by Principal Matthew Carey, Principal of Project for Alternative Learning (PAL).

IV. PRESENTATION

Principal Matthew Carey began his presentation with the PAL philosophy, *“This is our school: a place of knowledge, tolerance, respect and understanding. We welcome the people who want to be here, and we invite them to share in our unique learning community.”* Principal Carey shared the phrase *TARPIT* that they follow at PAL that stands for, *Tolerance, Acceptance, Respect, Pride, Individuality, and Trust*.

Principal Carey shared the staff demographics at PAL:

- 8 Teachers
 - .5 Art, .5 Homeless Liaison
- 1 Counselor
- 1 Paraeducator
- 1 Food Service Staff
- 1 Administrative Assistant
- 1 Administrator
- PureView Health
 - LCSW, 12 on caseload
 - Monday and Friday

- SRO
 - Typically CRA
- Nurse
 - Shared CHS
- Athletics
- Driver's Education
- Lewis and Clark Literacy Council
- Building was originally a Safeway in the late 1950s!

Principal Carey shared the student path to PAL and through PAL:

- Complete Application
- Information Night
- HHS/CHS/PAL Applicant Review
- PAL Principal Student Meeting at HHS/CHS
- Student Interview at PAL
- Orientation Experience
- Advisor
- Unique Class Offerings
- Senior Project / Speech
- Graduation

Principal Carey shared data from PAL:

- Average ACT Scores (2024)
 - Composite 15.2 (28th %ile Nationally)
 - Average of English/Math/Reading/Science. 18 = 50th %ile
 - Math 14.4
 - Science 19.5
 - English 13.9
 - Reading 16.4
- Attendance (From January to Current)
- Seniors (32)
 - 91.8%
- Juniors (34)
 - 87.3%
- Sophomores (21)
 - 89.4%

- Overall
 - 89.5%
- Total Enrollment
 - 87 students
 - 45 CHS, 52%
 - 42 HHS, 48%
- Exceptionalities
 - 504, 18%
 - IEP, 10%
- Free and Reduced
 - 53%
- RBHI
 - Red 15%
 - Yellow 11%
 - Green 74%
- Students Entering PAL Credit Deficient (21-current)
 - 34%
- McKinney Vento
 - 13%
- Graduation Rate
- (2021 cohort to class of 2024)
 - About 80%
- Credits Recovered Through PAL's Blended Lab (23-24)
 - 24 different students
 - 20.5 credits (with a few more students to finish!)
 - Other Credit Recovery Paths For Students

Next, Principal Carey shared the community engagement at PAL:

- Student-Led Science Presentations with Elementary Schools
- PPLT
- MT FWP
- Carnival Classic
- YMCA Collaboration
- Last Chance Pow Wow
- Kiwanis Partnership
- RMCU Reality Fair
- MAPS Media Institute

Principal Carey shared PAL recognitions, distinctions, and notable events:

- Student Speakers at OPI Conference - School Climate/Relationships
- PAL Thanksgiving
- PAL Senior Speeches
- PAL Graduation

- Helena Education Foundation Awards Distinguished Students
- L & C Library Bookmobile Visits Smiles Across Montana
- Gates of the Mountains Tour
- World Affairs Teams

Educator Ryan Cooney, Educator Michele Zentz, and a former PAL graduate who is now attending college, as well as two current PAL students spoke about their appreciation of PAL and how much the school has positively impacted their lives.

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

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Items For Information

1. Health Benefits Committee Plan Changes Update-Rich Franco

Mr. Franco shared updates from the Health Benefits Committee meeting regarding proposed plan changes:

- The Health Benefits Committee is “unbundling” the plans so employees can elect which options they want with Medical/Rx, Dental and Vision.
- Our Premium Plan will be known as “Option 1”. It will go from a \$500 individual deductible to \$750. The Max out of Pocket for the individual will go from \$2,000 to \$3,000.
- The Standard Plan will be known as “Option 2”. It will go from a \$1,000 deductible to a \$2,000 deductible. The Max out of Pocket for the individual will go from \$5,000 to \$6,000.
- Both Plans will be 70/30 Plans, meaning after the deductible is met the health plan will pay 70% and the member will pay 30% until the max out of pocket is met.
- The cost of premiums between the two plans had a gap of about 47.2%, which is extraordinarily high. The national standard is typically around 10%-15%. The committee is looking at closing the gap to 20%.
- The committee is looking at moving the ratios of each plan category:

PREM		
EE Only	1.00	1.00
EE + Sp1.91	2.10	
EE + Dep	1.16	1.80
EE + Fam	2.06	3.10
EE + Children to 1.3 and EE + Fam to 2.2		

Mr. Franco concluded his presentation by answering any questions the trustees had regarding his update.

2. Secure Environment Consultants-Jason Russell

Mr. Jason Russell is Founder and President of Secure Environment Consultants. As president of SEC, Mr. Russell leads a team of former federal law enforcement agents, police officials, and military specialists in delivering threat assessment and protection to schools and businesses. SEC has worked in the Helena School District before and performed several audits. Mr. Russell has been here this week performing a second round of assessments in the district along with meeting administration and staff members. Mr. Russell shared what the assessment process looks like at schools, and how he makes safety recommendations based on the assessments. Due to our safety and security levies not passing Mr. Russell stated he is limited in terms of recommendations that have any costs associated with them. Mr. Russell will be conducting a Community School Safety Forum on Wednesday, May 22nd, at 6:00 p.m. at the Capital High School auditorium. Mr. Russell concluded his presentation by answering any questions the Board of Trustees had.

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

B. Consent Action Items

1. Personnel Actions
2. 4.23.24 Board Work Session Meeting Minutes
3. Disposal of Surplus Property - C.R. Anderson Novels
4. Disposal of Surplus Property – Outdated Math Materials K-5

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

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

Public Comment: None.

Vote: 5-0 motion carries unanimously.

The Board of Trustees moved on to the Oath of Office for 2024-2027 Elected Trustee Rachel Robison.

C. Oath of Office for 2024-2027 Elected Trustee, Rachel Robison

Katrina Chaney, Lewis and Clark County Superintendent, swore in Rachel Robison as a Trustee for the Helena Public Schools Board of Trustees for a term of three years, beginning on the 21st day of May 2024, and ending at the trustee organizational meeting in May 2027, or until a successor has been elected or appointed and has been qualified.

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

D. Items for Action

1. Canvass of Election Results & Issue Certificates of Election (Elementary)
a. Certificate of Election for Elementary General Fund Mill Levy

Siobhan Hathhorn, Board Chair, commented. "I would entertain a motion for action item number one, subcategory *a. Certificate of Election for Elementary General Fund Mill Levy.*"

Motion: Trustee Kay Satre moved to approve the *Certificate of Election for Elementary General Fund Mill Levy*. Trustee Jennifer McKee seconded the motion.

Public Comment: None.

Vote: 4-0 motion carries unanimously. *(Please note that Trustee Jennifer Walsh abstained from voting because she is strictly a trustee for the high school, and this action item is for the elementary district.)*

b. Certificate of Election for Elementary Technology Fund Mill Levy

Siobhan Hathhorn, Board Chair, commented. "I would entertain a motion for action item number one, subcategory *b. Certificate of Election for Elementary Technology Fund Mill Levy.*"

Motion: Trustee Jennifer McKee moved to approve the *Certificate of Election for Elementary Technology Fund Mill Levy.* Trustee Linda Cleatus seconded the motion.

Public Comment: None.

Vote: 4-0 motion carries unanimously. *(Please note that Trustee Jennifer Walsh abstained from voting because she is strictly a trustee for the high school, and this action item is for the elementary district.)*

c. Certificate of Election for Elementary School and Student Safety and Security Building Reserve Fund Mill Levy

Siobhan Hathhorn, Board Chair, commented. “I would entertain a motion for action item number one, subcategory *c. Certificate of Election for Elementary School and Student Safety and Security Building Reserve Fund Mill Levy.*”

Motion: Trustee Kay Satre moved to approve the *Certificate of Election for Elementary School and Student Safety and Security Building Reserve Fund Mill Levy*. Trustee Linda Cleatus seconded the motion.

Public Comment: None.

Vote: 4-0 motion carries unanimously. *(Please note that Trustee Jennifer Walsh abstained from voting because she is strictly a trustee for the high school, and this action item is for the elementary district.)*

2. Canvass of Election Results & Issue Certificates of Election (High School)
a. Certificate of Election for High School Technology Fund Mill Levy

Siobhan Hathhorn, Board Chair, commented. “I would entertain a motion for action item number two, subcategory *a. Certificate of Election for High School Technology Fund Mill Levy.*”

Motion: Trustee Jennifer Walsh moved to approve the *Certificate of Election for High School Technology Fund Mill Levy*. Trustee Kay Satre seconded the motion.

Public Comment: None.

Vote: 5-0 motion carries unanimously.

b. Certificate of Election for High School and Student Safety and Security and Building Reserve Fund Mill Levy

Siobhan Hathhorn, Board Chair, commented. “I would entertain a motion for action item number two, subcategory *b. Certificate of Election High School and Student Safety and Security and Building Reserve Fund Mill Levy.*”

Motion: Trustee Jennifer Walsh moved to approve the *Certificate of Election High School and Student Safety and Security and Building Reserve Fund Mill Levy*. Trustee Jennifer McKee seconded the motion.

Public Comment: None.

Vote: 5-0 motion carries unanimously.

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

VI. BOARD COMMENTS

The board had a robust conversation about the district's health benefits plan and discussed topics including but not limited to rate increases, trend percentages, and the health benefits reserve fund amounts.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Board Chair Siobhan Hathorn adjourned the meeting at 5:56 p.m.

Candice Delvaux, Recording Secretary