



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 Summer Retreat

Wednesday, July 24th, 2024
Bryant Elementary School
1520 Livingston Avenue
Helena, MT 59601
9:00 a.m.

AGENDA

I. CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

II. REVIEW OF AGENDA

III. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

This is the time for comment on public matters that are not on the agenda. Public matters do not include any pending legal matters, private personnel issues or private student issues. Please do not attempt to address such issues at this time or you will be ruled out of order. The Board cannot enter into a discussion during General Public Comment.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Consent Action Items

1. Personnel Actions
2. Warrants
3. Electronic Vote on MTSBA Association Business
4. Acknowledge FY 2024-25 Out-Of-District Attendance Agreements (Helena Resident Students Attending Other School Districts)
5. Approval of FY 2024-25 Out-Of-District Attendance Agreements (Nonresident Students Attending Helena School District)
6. 5.21.24 Board of Trustees Work Session Minutes

7. 5.24.24 Board of Trustees Work Session Minutes
8. 5.30.24 Board of Trustees Work Session Minutes
9. 6.4.24 Board of Trustees Work Session Minutes
10. 6.11.24 Board of Trustees Full Board Meeting Minutes

B. Items For Action

1. Approval and Ratification of the HPS-Carpenter Collective Bargaining Agreement for 2024-2026
2. Approval and Ratification of the HPS-Craft Council Collective Bargaining Agreement for 2024-2025
3. Approval and Ratification of the HPS-Custodians and Centralized Maintenance Collective Bargaining Agreement for 2024-2025
4. Approval and Ratification of the HPS-Electrician Collective Bargaining Agreement for 2024-2026
5. Approval of a General Wage Increase to the Independent Salary Matrix for 2024-2025

C. Item For Information

1. Board of Trustees Summer Retreat Discussion

V. BOARD COMMENTS

VI. ADJOURNMENT

**HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board of Trustees Meeting**

Meeting Date: 07/24/2024

Item III.

General Public Comment

Consent Action Items

Items For Action

Item Title: General Public Comment

**HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board of Trustees Meeting**

Meeting Date: 07/24/2024

Item IV.

General Public Comment

Consent Action Items

Items For Action

Item Title: Consent Action Items

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Board Action	1st Motion	Second	Aye	Nay	Other
Hathhorn					
McKee					
Robison					
Satre					
Hindoien					
Cleatus					
Walsh					
Armstrong					

PERSONNEL ACTIONS

June 12, 2024 – July 24, 2024

CERTIFIED PERSONNEL

Appointments

<u>Location/Assignment</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Offered Salary</u>	<u>Accepted Salary</u>	<u>Start Date</u>
Broadwater/Grade 1	Alexander, Brooke	\$46,088.28/yr.	\$46,088.28/yr.	08/26/2024
Warren/Grade 2-3 Combination	Arpin, Alinon	\$51,447.38/yr.	\$51,447.38/yr.	08/26/2024
Rossiter/Grade 1	Berry-Brown, Shana	\$61,808.67/yr.	\$61,808.67/yr.	08/26/2024
Bryant/Grade 1	Blunn, Lauren	\$51,090.46/yr.	\$51,090.46/yr.	08/26/2024
Broadwater/Kindergarten	Booton, Brittney	\$58,235.21/yr.	\$58,235.21/yr.	08/26/2024
Four Georgians/Kindergarten	Boyle, Jessi	\$45,016.45/yr.	\$45,016.45/yr.	08/26/2024
CHS-HHS/German (.80 FTE)	Browning, Elizabeth	\$49,446.94/yr.	\$49,446.94/yr.	08/26/2024
Central/Kindergarten Montessori	Carney, Joslyn	\$64,057.34/yr.	\$64,057.34/yr.	08/26/2024
Lincoln/Director of SPED-Student Services	Carter, Lona	\$117,649.60/yr.	\$117,649.60/yr.	07/01/2024
Hawthorne/Grade 3	Christianson, Justine	\$47,160.09/yr.	\$47,160.09/yr.	08/26/2024
CHS/English	Clancy, Regan	\$45,016.45/yr.	\$45,016.45/yr.	08/26/2024
Bryant/Kindergarten	Collier, Darcee	\$57,960.83/yr.	\$57,960.83/yr.	08/26/2024
Jefferson/Grade 1	Collins, Minjian	\$63,594.32/yr.	\$63,594.32/yr.	08/26/2024
CRA/Mathematics	Crawford, Shelley	\$60,021.94/yr.	\$60,021.94/yr.	08/26/2024
CRA/Health & Physical Education	Curry, Bryana	\$43,944.64/yr.	\$43,944.64/yr.	08/26/2024
CHS/Mathematics	Dearborn, Tasha	\$63,594.32/yr.	\$63,594.32/yr.	08/26/2024
Kessler/Grade 4-5 Combination	Dolphay, Meghan	\$51,983.29/yr.	\$51,983.29/yr.	08/26/2024
CRA/Music-Orchestra	Elliott, Allison	\$49,303.74/yr.	\$49,303.74/yr.	08/26/2024
Hawthorne/Grade 5	Ellison, Teaje	\$49,303.74/yr.	\$49,303.74/yr.	08/26/2024
Jim Darcy/Grade 5	Fairelough, Hunter	\$45,016.45/yr.	\$45,016.45/yr.	08/26/2024
Hawthorne/.50 FTE Principal-.50 FTE PE	Fisher, Jessica	\$89,508.48/yr.	\$89,508.48/yr.	08/05/2024
HMS/English	Fuhrman, Georgia	\$46,088.28/yr.	\$46,088.28/yr.	08/26/2024
CHS/Mathematics	Garmer, Sydney	\$65,444.28/hr.	\$65,444.28/yr.	08/26/2024
SSC/TOSA	Hatten, Teal	\$61,808.67/yr.	\$61,808.67/yr.	08/26/2024
TBD/Special Education-Resource	Hillmer, Genevieve	\$64,057.34/yr.	\$64,057.34/yr.	08/26/2024
Broadwater/Lower Montessori	Hoem, Allison	\$51,090.46/yr.	\$51,090.46/yr.	08/26/2024
SSC/BCBA	Hogan, Brittany	\$65,775.16/yr.	\$65,775.16/yr.	08/26/2024
CRA/Art	Hogan, James	\$45,016.45/yr.	\$45,016.45/yr.	08/26/2024

HMS/Social Studies (.50 FTE)	Howard, Audrey	\$30,904.34/yr.	\$30,904.34/yr.	08/26/2024
CRA/.50 FTE Asst. Principal-.50 FTE Teacher	Hunt, Erin	\$92,475.15/yr.	\$92,475.15/yr.	08/05/2024
CHS/Mathematics	Hunt, Sharon	\$51,447.38/yr.	\$51,447.39/yr.	08/26/2024
CRA/English	Kendrick, Sara	\$61,808.67/yr.	\$61,808.67/yr.	08/26/2024
Warren/Elementary Principal	Kuhl, Abby	\$105,250.00/yr.	\$105,250.00/yr.	08/05/2024
SSC/TOSA	Literski, Katherine	\$82,417.63/yr.	\$82,417.63/yr.	08/26/2024
TBD/Occupational Therapist	Long, Kaitlyn	\$61,883.69/yr.	\$61,883.69/yr.	08/26/2024
CRA/Science	Mongillo, Amanda	\$60,021.94/yr.	\$60,021.94/yr.	08/26/2024
HMS/Assistant Principal	Maxwell, Erin	\$105,250.00/yr.	\$105,250.00/yr.	07/01/2024
Four Georgians/Kindergarten	McCarl Warwick, Alyssa	\$46,088.28/yr.	\$46,088.28/yr.	08/26/2024
CRA/Geography	McGinley, Matthew	\$43,944.64/yr.	\$43,944.64/yr.	08/26/2024
Broadwater/Grade 5	Mergenthaler, Heather	\$42,872.81/yr.	\$42,872.81/yr.	08/26/2024
Warren/Grade 1	Mereydk, Emily	\$49,303.74/yr.	\$49,303.74/yr.	08/26/2024
Kessler/Grade 3	Mouledous, Dilone	\$46,088.28/yr.	\$46,088.28/yr.	08/26/2024
HHS/Assistant Principal	Peterson, Eric	\$105,245.00/yr.	\$105,245.00/yr.	07/01/2024
Broadwater/Grade 4-5 Combination	Quigley, Grayson	\$46,088.28/yr.	\$46,088.28/yr.	08/26/2024
CHS/CTE	Riehl, Theodore	\$70,683.34/yr.	\$70,683.34/yr.	08/26/2024
CRA/English	Sechrist, Laurie	\$54,662.84/yr.	\$54,662.84/yr.	08/26/2024
Jim Darcy/Grade 5	Skolrud, Megan	\$61,282.40/yr.	\$61,282.40/yr.	08/26/2024
Central/Grade 1	Tague, Rhiannon	\$60,021.94/yr.	\$60,021.94/yr.	08/26/2024
Hawthorne/Kindergarten	Talia, Jaime	\$51,090.46/yr.	\$51,090.46/yr.	08/26/2024
HMS/Science	Towery, Andrea	\$59,895.47/yr.	\$59,895.47/yr.	08/26/2024
HHS/English	Vallincourt, Jessica	\$72,150.65/yr.	\$72,150.65/yr.	08/26/2024
Kessler/Grade 4	Van Voorst, Stephanie	\$65,444.28/yr.	\$65,444.28/yr.	08/26/2024
CHS/English	Veit, Susan	\$56,476.36/yr.	\$56,476.36/yr.	08/26/2024
Smith/Grade 1	White, Kaitlyn	\$43,944.64/yr.	\$43,944.64/yr.	08/26/2024
Kessler-Jefferson-Rossiter/Music	Wilkerson, Lindsey	\$61,808.67/yr.	\$61,808.67/yr.	08/26/2024

Terminations/Retirements

<u>Location/Assignment</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Reason</u>	<u>Effective</u>
HHS/Special Education-Resource	Brown, Michelle	Resignation	07/10/2024

Leaves

<u>Location/Assignment</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Term</u>	<u>Type of Leave</u>
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Kessler/Music	Evans, Nicole	2024-2025	LOAWOP
Central/Kindergarten	Mitchell, Jessie	2024-2025	LOAWOP
Smith/Grade 1	Sorensen, Linda	2024-2025	LOAWOP

CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL

Appointments

<u>Location/Assignment</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Offered Salary</u>	<u>Accepted Salary</u>	<u>Start Date</u>
HMS/Para Educator	Corcoran, Shiloh	\$17.88/hr.	\$17.88/hr.	08/26/2024
HMS/Para Educator	Wilson, Magdalynn	\$15.46/hr.	\$15.46/hr.	08/26/2024
CRA/E-NET Tutor	Reinning, Kaitlin	\$19.89/hr.	\$19.89/hr.	08/26/2024

Terminations/Retirements

<u>Location/Assignment</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Reason</u>	<u>Effective</u>
Jefferson/Para Educator	Birmingham, Cristin	Resignation	06/24/2024
CRA/Evening Custodian	Gibson, Jalen	Separation	06/07/2024
Jefferson/Evening Custodian	Lear, Jonathon	Separation	06/07/2024
Kessler/Evening Custodian	Littlefield, Jason	Resignation	07/01/2024
Central/Para Educator	Lopez, Kimberly	Resignation	07/15/2024
Hawthorne/Elementary Secretary	Miller, Linda	Separation	06/13/2024
HHS/Para Educator	Pate-Terry, Hunter	Resignation	07/16/2024

Leaves

<u>Location/Assignment</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Term</u>	<u>Type of Leave</u>
Smith/Para Educator	Harper, Christina	08/28/2024 to 11/20/2024	LOA

SUPPLEMENTARY CONTRACT ASSIGNMENT

Robert	Loveridge	Festival Manager	\$2,900.00	Helena/Capital
Marie	Rauch	Annual	\$1,093.54	PAL
Kevin	Cleary	Orchestra-CHS	\$3,863.00	Capital High
Jamie	Toivonen	Annual	\$1,988.70	Capital High
Duane	Zehr	Band Director	\$4,442.45	Capital High
Jamie	Toivonen	BPOA	\$2,626.00	Capital High
Taetumn	Bailey	Cheerleading-Head Coach	\$4,175.34	Capital High
Dessirae	Anderson	Cheerleading-JV Coach	\$2,870.00	Capital High
Thomas	Baty	Choir	\$4,249.30	Capital High
Aspen	Herndon	Concessions	\$5,279.04	Capital High
David	Tuss	Cross Country-Head Girls	\$3,350.66	Capital High
Patrick	Paradis	Cross Country-Asst Boys	\$2,318.96	Capital High
Sarah	Urban	Cross Country-Asst Girls	\$2,433.76	Capital High
Heather	Barton (Shippen)	Cross Country-Coordinator	\$353.50	Capital High
Chris	Beskid	Cross Country-Head Boys	\$3,413.88	Capital High
Danette	Ruddell	Dance Team	\$2,551.02	Capital High
Jessica	Freeman (Frazier)	DECA	\$2,614.14	Capital high
Matthew	Gibbons	Drama-Asst Coach	\$3,496.76	Capital High
Laura	Brayko	Drama-Head Coach	\$5,891.45	Capital High
Lana	Curry	Facilities Coordinator	\$1,224.00	Capital High
Miriah	Smith	Stadium Coordinator	\$612.00	Capital High
James E	Hogan	Football-Asst Coach	\$3,731.70	Capital High
Reid	Christensen	Football-Asst Coach	\$4,371.42	Capital High
Jared	Hunt	Football-Asst Coach	\$3,767.24	Capital High
Jeffrey	Mahana	Football-Asst Coach	\$3,980.48	Capital High
Patrick	Larson	Football-Asst Coach	\$2,061.32	Capital High
Arin	Herndon	Football-Coordinator	\$1,896.18	Capital High
Ryan	Richards	Football-Head Coach Frosh	\$1,115.88	Capital High
Kyle	Mihelish	Football-Head Coach Varsity	\$6,384.98	Capital High
Matthew	McGinley	Football-Frosh Asst	\$1,108.23	Capital High
Nathan (Nate)	McGree	Football Frosh Asst	\$1,108.23	Capital High
Derek	Kraus	Football-Asst Coach	\$1,812.54	Capital High
Coby	Furlong	Football-Asst Coach	\$3,944.94	Capital High

Mathew	Reyant	Football-Asst Coach	\$3,909.40	Capital High
Casey	Lyndes	Golf-Head Coach	\$4,701.12	Capital High
Richard	Franco	Golf-Asst Coach	\$2,244.00	Capital High
Duane	Zehr	Pep Band	\$1,492.70	Capital High
Eric	Croft	Skills/USA	\$2,207.48	Capital High
Matthew	Heinze	Soccer-JV Boys	\$1,726.40	Capital High
Adam	Clinch	Soccer-Asst Boys	\$2,563.08	Capital High
Alex	Nyland	Soccer-Asst Girls	\$2,442.18	Capital High
Nancy	Peterson	Soccer-Coordinator	\$954.72	Capital High
Brandon	Hoang	Soccer-JV Girls	\$1,743.00	Capital High
Stefan	Wall	Soccer-Head Boys	\$3,228.12	Capital High
Brandon	Price	Soccer-Head Coach Girls	\$3,258.01	Capital High
Benjamin	Terhune	Speech-Asst Coach	\$2,618.20	Capital High
Wendy	Magera	Speech-Asst Coach	\$2,494.70	Capital High
Nick	Taffs	Speech-Asst Coach	\$2,544.10	Capital High
Heather	Ditch	Speech-Head Coach	\$4,263.60	Capital High
Aspen	Herndon	Volleyball-Coordinator	\$1,530.00	Capital High
Sydney	Garmer	Volleyball-Frosh Coach	\$2,383.60	Capital High
Ava	Dunnehoff	Volleyball-Frosh Coach	\$2,383.60	Capital High
Katrina (Katie)	Clement	Volleyball-Head Coach	\$5,227.50	Capital High
Aspen	Herndon	Volleyball-JV Coach	\$3,311.94	Capital High
Ashley	VanAllen	Volleyball-Soph Coach	\$3,168.12	Capital High
Megan	Walsh	Annual	\$2,007.64	Helena High
Cody	Hollow	Band Director	\$4,017.52	Helena High
Kevin	Cleary	Orchestra-HHS	\$3,863.00	Helena High
Samantha	Humphrey	BPOA	\$2,912.00	Helena High
Alexis	Navarrete	Cheerleading-Head Coach	\$4,299.36	Helena High
Bree	Wilmot (Christenson)	Cheerleading-JV Coach	\$3,042.20	Helena High
Molly	Kohoutek (Steele)	Choir	\$4,287.93	Helena High
Randy	Hussey	Concessions	\$5,126.76	Helena High
Michael	Kauffman	Cross Country-Asst Boys	\$2,341.92	Helena High
Jonna	Schwartz	Cross Country-Asst Girls	\$2,410.80	Helena High
John	Burke	Cross Country-Coordinator	\$357.00	Helena High
Kelley	Gilbert	Cross Country-Head Boys	\$4,140.91	Helena High

Jesse	Zentz	Cross Country-Head Girls	\$3,413.88	Helena High
Lexsey	Carpenter	Dance Team	\$2,576.03	Helena High
Kacey	Askin	DECA	\$2,563.38	Helena High
Madilyn	Sechrist	Drama-Asst Coach	\$3,300.68	Helena High
Rodger	Scruggs	Drama-Head Coach	\$5,459.05	Helena High
Eric	Peterson	Facilities Coordinator	\$1,200.00	Helena High
Kerry	Cicero	Football-Asst Coach	\$4,087.10	Helena High
Sean	Blomquist	Football-Frosh Asst	\$2,194.73	Helena High
Dustin	Pickens	Football-Head Coach Frosh	\$2,297.40	Helena High
Dane	Broadhead	Football-Head Coach Varsity	\$5,952.10	Helena High
Manuel	Garza	Football-Asst Coach	\$4,264.80	Helena High
Ryan	Schulte	Football-Asst Coach	\$4,122.64	Helena High
Kevin	Flatow	Football-Asst Coach	\$3,767.24	Helena High
Thomas	Kloker	Football-Coordinator	\$1,989.13	Helena High
Isiah	Cech	Football-Head Coach Frosh	\$3,731.70	Helena High
Shawn	Kraft	Football-Asst Coach	\$3,696.16	Helena High
Tim	Dalin	Golf-Asst Coach	\$2,288.00	Helena High
Dana	Shepherd	Golf-Head Coach	\$4,183.20	Helena High
Jill	VanAlstyne	Newspaper	\$1,753.38	Helena High
Cody	Hollow	Pep Band	\$1,349.92	Helena High
Jason	Hartwick	Skills/USA	\$1,179.86	Helena High
Veronica	Robertson	Skills/USA	\$1,160.83	Helena High
Colin	Salisbury	Soccer-Asst Boys	\$2,587.26	Helena High
Bernard	Kintzing	Soccer-JV Boys	\$1,676.60	Helena High
Heather	Kentzel	Soccer-JV Girls	\$2,085.65	Helena High
Kody	Clements	Soccer-Asst Girls	\$1,676.60	Helena High
Philip	McGovern	Soccer-Coordinator	\$991.44	Helena High
Carl	Straub	Soccer-Head Coach Boys	\$3,676.47	Helena High
Benjamin	Terhune	Speech-Asst Coach	\$2,618.20	Helena High
Daniel	Ruether-Affor	Speech - Asst Coach	\$2,494.70	Helena High
Amber	Peden	Speech-Asst Coach	\$2,494.70	Helena High
Jennifer	Hermanson	Speech-Head Coach	\$4,765.20	Helena High
Kelly	Strandberg	Stadium-Coordinator	\$660.00	Helena High
Kayla	Lunnon	Volleyball-Coordinator	\$1,695.00	Helena High

Allie	Keleti	Volleyball-Frosh Coach	\$2,407.20	Helena High
Shelly	Crawford	Volleyball-Frosh Coach	\$2,383.60	Helena High
Lindsey	Day	Volleyball-Head Coach	\$5,637.50	Helena High
Johannah	Amestoy	Volleyball-JV Coach	\$3,474.29	Helena High
Emily	Forsman	Volleyball-Soph Coach	\$3,168.12	Helena High

Helena School District #1

Warrants June 1 to 30, 2024

Direct Deposits: \$7,884,737.13

Payroll Warrants: 70131829-70131850

Payroll Deduction: 69300130-69300170

Non-Check Payroll Deductions: 13,710,221.22

Non-Check Accts Payable Deductions: \$1,771,411.34

Non-Check Accts Payable Deductions- HHS Extracurricular: \$0

Claim Warrants: 69299890-69300335

CRA Middle School Student Activity Checks: 17420-17430

HMS Middle School Student Activity Checks: 8775-8780

Capital High Student Activity Checks: 24683-24704

Helena High Student Activity Checks: 36669-36698

Cancelled Warrants: \$6,415.07

We certify that all warrants herein listed were prepared and previously paid for, are just and correct to the best of our knowledge, and that the board of trustees has authorized the issuance of the same.

Chairperson _____

Business Manager _____



2024 ANNUAL MEETING

Thursday, June 6, 2024
1:00-5:00 PM

MTSBA Headquarters
863 Great Northern Blvd.
Helena, Montana 59601

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To: MTSBA Members
From: Tom Billteen, MTSBA President
Re: 2024 MTSBA Annual Meeting
Date: May 2, 2024

Dear Trustees,

I am grateful to all trustees who will be participating in this year's Annual Meeting and looking forward to seeing you at MTSBA Headquarters. In accordance with Article III, Section 1 of the MTSBA Bylaws, the Board of Directors has called the Annual Meeting of the Montana School Boards Association to convene at MTSBA Headquarters in Helena, Montana, on Thursday, June 6, 2024. The meeting is scheduled for 1:00 to :00 p.m.

I look forward to seeing you at the 2024 MTSBA Annual Meeting!

Tom Billteen
MTSBA President
Butte Municipal Director and Trustee

Agenda

2024 Annual Meeting of MTSBA Membership

In accordance with Article III, Section 1 of the MTSBA Bylaws, the Board of Directors has called the Annual Meeting of the Montana School Boards Association to convene at MTSBA Headquarters, 863 Great Northern Blvd., Helena, Montana on Thursday, June 6, 2024. The meeting is scheduled for 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.

The Order of Business at the Annual Meeting shall be:

1. Call to Order, Introductions, Determination of quorum and appointment of Credentials Committee – MTSBA President Tom Billteen
2. Consent Agenda
 - a. MTSBA's Principles and Guidelines
 - b. MTSBA DNA
3. MTSBA Financial Report
4. Consideration of Vision Based Strategic Advocacy Resolution (Initially adopted July 2023 includes proposed amendment from October 2023 Delegate Assembly)
5. Consideration of Gap Analysis Resolution (Initially adopted July 2023, includes proposed amendment from MTSBA Advocacy Committee pursuant to direction of the from October 2023 Delegate Assembly)
6. Election of Officers of the Corporation.
 - a. President-Elect Nominee Krystal Zentner (Region 9 and Bridger Trustee) Unanimously nominated by the MTSBA Board.
 - b. Vice President Nominee (Rick Cummings, Region 5 Director and Cascade Trustee) Unanimously nominated by the MTSBA Board.
 - c. New MTSBA President Assumes office, Tom Billteen transitions to Sue Corrigan
7. Consent Agenda (in case of motion to pull MTSBA's Principles and Guidelines or its Organizational DNA from the consent agenda for deliberation)
8. Adjournment.

¹ Note: Sue Corrigan, Kalispell Municipal Director and Trustee will automatically assume the office of President for 2024-2025, and Tom Billteen, Butte Municipal Director and Trustee, will automatically assume the office of Immediate Past President for 2024-2025 pursuant to the MTSBA Bylaws.

MTSBA Board of Directors



Tom Bilteen
President
Butte
Municipal Director



Sue Corrigan
President-Elect
Kalispell
Municipal Director



Krystal Zentner
Vice President
Region 9
Bridger Trustee



Scott Walter
Immediate Past President
Region 11
East Helena Trustee



Barb Riley
Region 1
Columbia Falls Trustee



Iris Kill Eagle
Region 2
Dobson Trustee
ISBC Vice Chair



Vacant
Region 3



Vacant
Region 4



Rick Cummings
Region 5
Cascade Trustee



Kate Cleveland
Region 6
St. Regis
Trustee



Vacant
Region 7



Kara Edgar
Region 8
Big Sky Trustee



August Scalpcane
Region 10
Lame Deer Trustee



Jennifer Hoffman
Billings
Municipal Director



Lei-Anna Bertelsen
Bozeman
Municipal Director



Siobhan Hathorn
Helena
Municipal Director



Mark Finnicum
Great Falls
Municipal Director

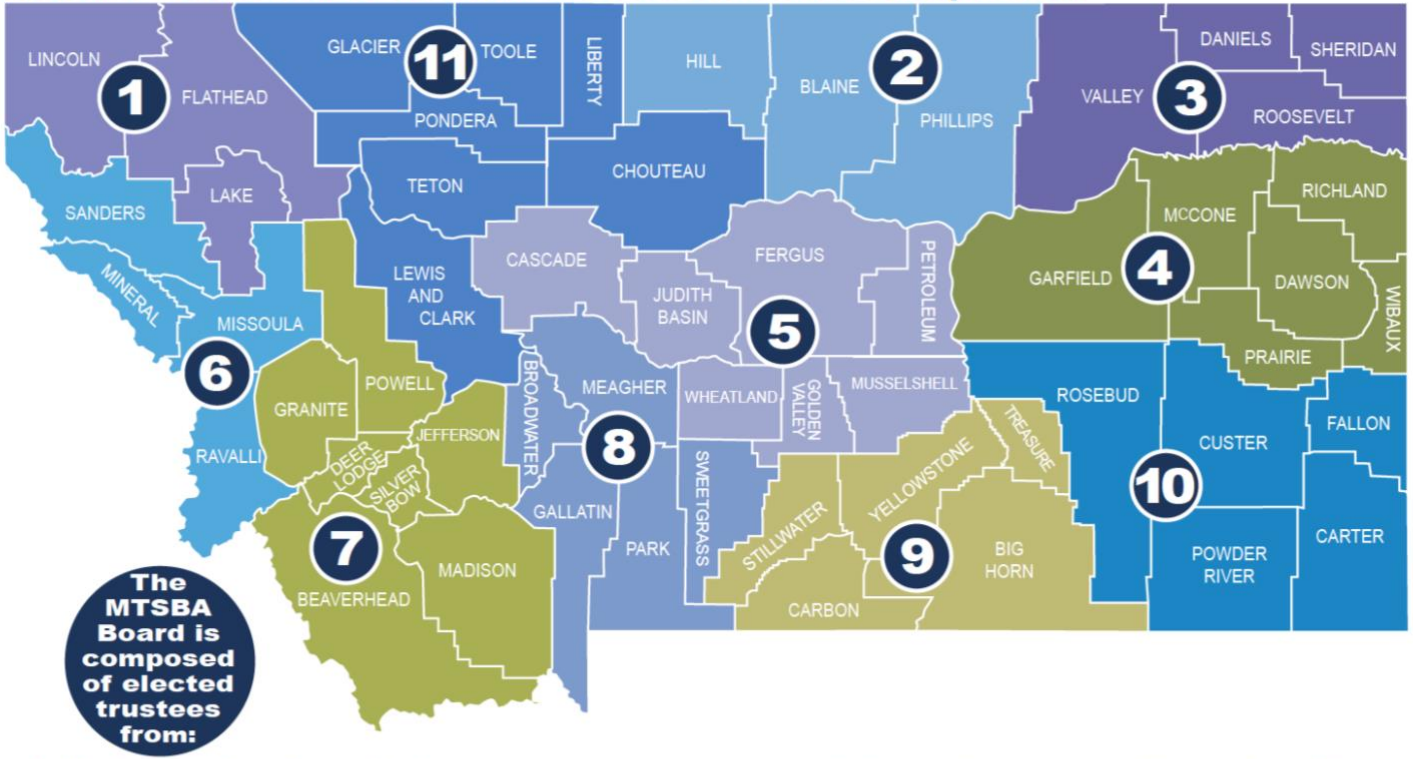


Arlene Walker-Andrews
Missoula
Municipal Director



Vacant
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Montana School Boards Association Board of Directors composition:



11 - Members from these Geographic Areas:

- Region 1: Flathead, Lake, and Lincoln
- Region 2: Blaine, Hill, and Phillips
- Region 3: Daniels, Roosevelt, Sheridan, and Valley
- Region 4: Dawson, Garfield, McCone, Prairie, Richland, and Wibaux
- Region 5: Cascade, Fergus, Judith Basin, Wheatland, Musselshell, Golden Valley, and Petroleum
- Region 6: Mineral, Missoula, Ravalli, and Sanders
- Region 7: Granite, Powell, Jefferson, Beaverhead, Deer Lodge, Madison, and Silver Bow
- Region 8: Broadwater, Gallatin, Meagher, Park, and Sweet Grass
- Region 9: Big Horn, Carbon, Stillwater, Treasure, and Yellowstone
- Region 10: Carter, Custer, Fallon, Powder River, and Rosebud
- Region 11: Glacier, Liberty, Pondera, Teton, Toole, Choteau, and Lewis & Clark

7 - Members from these Municipal Areas:

- Billings
- Bozeman
- Butte
- Great Falls
- Helena
- Kalispell
- Missoula

2 - Members from ISBC:

Indian School Board Caucus Chairperson and Vice Chairperson, open to MTSBA member school boards who serve American Indian children in their schools.

Rules for Consideration of All Items of Business

1. The rules contained in Robert's Rule of Order Revised shall be used as a guide to facilitate the fair and constructive conduct of and to help, not hinder, the business of the Assembly. We will proceed with an intent of operating as informally as the orderly conduct of business allows and will resort to more formalized procedures only when the presiding officer determines necessary in order to effectuate the orderly conduct of business of the Assembly.
2. In speaking to a motion, a Trustee will be limited to three minutes.
3. When a member has once spoken on a question, the trustee will not be recognized again for the same question until all others who wish to speak have done so.
4. Due to the hybrid nature of the annual meeting voting will be handled by trustee voting orally and/or via raised hands at the discretion of the presiding officer. In the event the presiding officer deems the vote too close to call a roll call vote will immediately commence. The roll call vote is a weighted voted as governed by MTSBA By-laws. A trustee from the floor may also call for a roll call vote.
5. An amendment proposed via a motion to amend can be quite extensive, even in the form of a substitute motion that replaces the entirety of original wording. As such, members interested in any adopted or proposed resolution in its current form are encouraged to be aware of this possibility.

Article III, Section 8 of the MTSBA Bylaws provides as follows:

“SECTION 8. RESOLUTIONS. No resolution shall be presented to the membership at the annual meeting without first having been approved by the Delegate Assembly, unless said resolution is electronically submitted and received by MTSBA by 5:00 p.m. fourteen (14) days preceding the annual meeting or with 500 copies made available at registration for the annual meeting and the delegates permit the consideration thereof by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting at the annual meeting to suspend the rules to consider said resolution.”

Article XI of the MTSBA Bylaws provides as follows:

“ARTICLE XI – SOURCES AND HIERARCHY OF AUTHORITY

The Montana School Boards Association operates pursuant to authority granted and under legal restrictions imposed by virtue of its organizational structure as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation. Such authority and restrictions take precedence over all other sources of authority for the Montana School Boards Association. The Montana School Boards Association also operates under the authority of and pursuant to the restrictions imposed by various member adopted documents. The hierarchy of member-adopted documents is as follows:

1. MTSBA's Bylaws;
2. Principles and Guidelines adopted by the membership;
3. Resolutions passed by the membership; and
4. Resolutions/Motions of any caucus of MTSBA.

In the case of a conflict between any of the above, the source of authority higher on the list above shall control.”

Registration Procedures and Deadline:

1. Trustees of member districts intending to attend and vote at the MTSBA Annual Meeting must register 5:00 p.m., on Tuesday, June 4 on mtsba.org. Due to the time needed to assign weighted votes to each trustee present, we are unable to accept registrations for the Annual Meeting after this deadline.
2. Votes for each member school board and individual trustee present will then be computed in accordance with the MTSBA Bylaws and assigned with our voting remotes that will be distributed at the beginning of the Annual Meeting on Friday. It is extremely important that trustees who have registered do attend the Annual Meeting, as your votes cannot be re- allocated to other trustees from your board if you fail to show, due to the advance time needed to compute and assign weighted votes.

Allocation of Votes by Member Boards:

1. Due to the hybrid nature of the annual meeting voting will be handled by trustees voting orally and/or via raised hands at the discretion of the presiding officer. In the event the presiding officer deems the vote too close to call a roll call vote will immediately commence. The roll call vote is a weighted voted as governed by MTSBA By-laws. A trustee from the floor may also call for a roll call vote.
2. Should a roll call vote be necessary, a member school board may, by motion of its members, vest the votes to which it is entitled in one or more trustees attending the meeting. If your board wishes to do this, you must submit a written notice of this intent to MTSBA, signed by the board chair, either sent by certified mail to MTSBA at our headquarters or sent via email to Emily Dean at edean@mtsba.org, with an electronic copy of the signed directive, to be received in MTSBA's offices no later than Wednesday, May 29 at 5:00 p.m.
3. Under the Bylaws, in the absence of a specific allocation provided by the member board, MTSBA will prorate the votes to which a member school board is entitled among the trustees from such board who comply with registration procedures as noted above.

Article III, Section 4 of the MTSBA Bylaws provides as follows:

“SECTION 4. VOTING. Each member board shall be entitled to a number of votes equal to one vote per \$100.00 or major fraction thereof, of annual dues paid by the member school board to the Corporation. No member board shall have less than one (1) vote. At any and all meetings of the members of the Corporation, the votes of the member school board may be vested in one or more of the delegates to the meeting as the member school board shall designate in writing, which said writing shall be delivered to the Credentials Committee. No delegate shall, however, be entitled to vote in excess of the greater of the following:

(1) fifteen (15) votes; or

(2) The total votes accorded a member district by virtue of its membership dues, divided by the total number of trustee positions, including filled and vacant positions, on such board.”

Part 1, Privileged Motions - These motions are listed in order of precedence. A motion can be introduced if it is higher on the chart than the pending motion. The section number refers to the section of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised (10th Edition)

Section	Purpose	You Say	Can you Interrupt?	Is a 2nd Required?	Is it Debatable?	Can it be amended?	What vote is required for passage?
21	Close Meeting	I move to adjourn	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
20	Take break	I move to recess for . .	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
19	Register complaint	I rise to a question of privilege	Yes	No	No	No	None - Resolved by presiding officer

Part 2, Subsidiary Motions

Section	Purpose	You Say	Can you Interrupt?	Is a 2nd Required?	Is it Debatable?	Can it be amended?	What vote is required for passage?
17	Lay aside temporarily	I move to table the motion	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
16	Close debate	I move the previous question	No	Yes	No	No	Two-thirds
15	Limit or extend debate	I move that debate be limited to . . .	No	Yes	No	Yes	Two-thirds
14	Postpone to a time certain	I move to postpone the motion to . . .	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
13	Refer to a Committee	I move to refer the motion to	No	yes	Yes	Yes	Majority

12	Modify wording of motion	I move to amend the motion by . . .	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
11	Kill main motion	I move that the motion be postponed indefinitely	No	Yes	Yes	No	Majority

Part 3, Main Motion

Section	Purpose	You Say	Can you Interrupt?	Is a 2nd Required?	Is it Debatable?	Can it be amended?	What vote is required for passage?
10	Bring business before the assembly (a main motion)	I move that (or "to") . . .	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority

Part 4 Incidental Motions. No order of precedence. These motions arise incidentally and are decided immediately.

Section	Purpose	You Say	Can you Interrupt?	Is a 2nd Required?	Is it Debatable?	Can it be amended?	What vote is required for passage?
23	Enforce Rules	Point of order	Yes	No	No	No	None - Resolved by presiding officer
24	Submit a decision of the chair on procedure to assembly	I appeal from the decision of the chair	Yes	Yes	No	No	Majority

25	Suspend rules	I move to suspend the rules	No	Yes	No	No	Two-thirds
26	Avoid main motion altogether	I object to the consideration of the question	Yes	No	No	No	Two-thirds
27	Divide motion	I move to divide the question	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
29	Demand a roll call vote	I move for a division of the assembly	Yes	No	No	No	None - Resolved by presiding officer
33	Parliamentary law question	Parliamentary inquiry	Yes	No	No	No	None - Resolved by presiding officer
33	Request for information	Point of information	Yes	No	No	No	None - Resolved by presiding officer

Motions That Bring a Question Again Before the Assembly. No order of precedence. Introduce only when nothing else is pending.

Section	Purpose	You Say	Can you Interrupt?	Is a 2nd Required?	Is it Debatable?	Can it be amended?	What vote is required for passage?
34	Take matter from the table	I move to take from the table	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
35	Cancel previous action	I move to rescind	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	two-thirds or majority with advance notice
37	Reconsider motion passed at the same meeting	I move to reconsider	No	Yes	Yes	No	Majority

Principles and Guidelines

Approved by the MTSBA Membership: July 2023

The purpose of this document is two-fold. First, it is intended to provide a framework of governance for school districts throughout Montana. You, as school board trustees, can review these Principles and Guidelines and use them as a guide to fulfill the Peoples' goal of developing the full educational potential of each child in your district. Secondly, this document identifies key advocacy issues that MTSBA will pursue on behalf of trustees, school districts, and each student in Montana in the pursuit of educational excellence.

Principle I

Alignment of efforts and activities with the Peoples' goal of developing the full educational potential of all the state's citizens while guaranteeing equality of educational opportunity to each person of the state.

Relevant Guidelines for School Boards:

School boards should:

1. Embrace excellence in the governance of their local public schools. This can be accomplished through coherent and aligned governance devoted to visionary and strategic based leadership, setting high expectations for all, embracing a culture of collaboration and team-building, and other practices and strategies that are focused on developing the full potential of each child.
2. School boards should remain focused on the success of each child in carrying out their statutory obligation to collectively bargain in good faith with their public employees in compliance with 39-31-305, MCA. Maintaining a focus on the individualized success of each child will help ensure that limited resources are used in the most effective and efficient manner possible in pursuing the people's goal of developing the full potential of each child.
3. Employ staff who are highly qualified and engaging.
4. Embrace the concept of personalized learning for all students embracing individualized, applied, work-based and distance learning opportunities to meet each child on their own terms to ensure student success. Create a safe environment for all that is conducive to learning, free from bullying, harassment, and intimidation.
5. Encourage and welcome parental and family involvement to help understand each child's needs.
6. Advocate in every possible manner for adequate school funding to pursue and accomplish the Peoples' goal of developing the full educational potential of each student.

Relevant Guidelines for MTSBA Activities:

MTSBA must:

1. Advocate for adequate, rational and flexible_funding for schools, sufficient to allow school districts to meaningfully comply with and provide an education worthy of the definition of the basic system of free quality schools in 20-9-309, MCA.

Principle II

Recognition of the shared authority for education between the community, locally elected school boards, and the bodies with constitutional authority and responsibility for education, including the Governor, the Montana Board of Public Education, and the Legislature.

Relevant Guidelines for School Boards:

School boards should:

1. Strongly embrace and advocate for the preservation of locally-made decisions within our communities.
2. Conscientiously use local, state, and federal resources to successfully educate students.
3. Engage, educate, and enlist the support of community members regarding the public schools' charge of developing the full educational potential of each child.

Relevant Guidelines for MTSBA Activities:

MTSBA must:

1. Advocate for supervision and control of the schools in each district by the community-elected board of trustees working in collaboration with the community in which they serve as the best way to ensure that all students are college, career and life ready, equipped to choose and thrive in a career of their choice.
2. Support and advocate for proper exercise of the Board of Public Education's and the Legislature's respective authority. The Board of Public Education is to exercise "general supervision" over the basic system of free quality schools, which should be exercised in a manner that does not intrude on the more specific and expansive authority of elected school boards to "supervise and control" education in each community. The Legislature is to define the basic system of free quality schools and fund it rationally, recognizing the Board of Public Education's accreditation standards which represent the minimum standards upon which the basic system of free quality schools is built.
3. Advocate for and enforce the constitutional guarantee and requirement that all publicly funded K-12 education in Montana be supervised and controlled by school boards publicly elected by the qualified electors in each district as required by Article X, Section 8 and Article IV, Section 2 of the Montana Constitution.

Principle III

Equality of educational opportunity for each person of the state.

Relevant Guidelines for School Boards:

School boards should:

1. Ensure that all resident children have full access to the programs and resources of their local public schools.
2. Ensure the opportunity to succeed for each child.

Relevant Guidelines for MTSBA Activities:

MTSBA must:

1. Work to provide adequate and equitable funding so that local boards can provide each child's access to programs and services.
2. Protect the equal right to respect, dignity, and opportunity for each child.

Principle IV

Recognition of and commitment to the preservation of the distinct and unique cultural heritage of American Indians.

Relevant Guidelines for School Boards:

School boards should:

1. Implement and maintain programs to preserve and educate its students regarding the cultural heritage and language of American Indian peoples and tribes.
2. Collaborate with American Indian peoples and tribes to ensure that educational programming is culturally relevant and in harmony with the corresponding efforts of tribal governments, education departments and tribal colleges.

Relevant Guidelines for MTSBA Activities:

MTSBA must:

1. Work to provide adequate funding for and state-wide commitment to Indian Education for All.
2. Recognize the negative impact that concentrated poverty can have on cultural preservation and pride and advocate for legislation to address and mitigate these negative impacts, including but not limited to advocacy for resources to address poverty, such as impact aid legislation.

Principle V

Balance between Church and State.

Relevant Guidelines for Trustees:

School boards should:

1. In accordance with our obligation of guarding the constitutional rights of families and children and in accordance with applicable court rulings, ensure an appropriate balance between freedom of religion and avoidance of endorsement of a particular religion.

Relevant Guidelines for MTSBA Activities:

MTSBA must:

1. Advocate for balance between the core religion issues expressed in the United States Constitution through the Establishment Clause, which bans the government from "establishing" a religion; and the Free Exercise Clause, which protects citizens' right to practice their religion. MTSBA shall use relevant holdings of the United States Supreme Court to guide its efforts and positions on these issues.
2. Advocate for continued support of student and family religious freedom.

Principle VI

Collaboration among and with our locally-elected school boards.

Relevant Guidelines for Trustees:

School boards should:

1. Recognize the shared bond among and autonomous authority of locally-elected school boards in exercising supervision and control of their respective public schools pursuant to Article X, Section 8 of the Montana Constitution;
2. Recognize the value of outreach to and collaboration among our locally-elected school boards and school districts;
3. Recognize and respect the potential for divergence in the interests of different area school boards when each are exercising supervision and control of their respective local public schools;
4. Recognize the dilution of effectiveness in MTSBA's advocacy when based on simple majorities rather than broad consensus among our member school boards.
5. Ensure open lines of communication among the constitutionally empowered trustees in areas throughout the state.
6. Work to resolve differences among area school boards and school districts through local solutions whenever possible.
7. Work to isolate the impact of division among school districts in a given area on overall unity and resulting effectiveness within and among state education organizations representing local school boards and their staff.

Relevant Guidelines for MTSBA Activities:

MTSBA must:

1. Understand, respect and equitably balance the interests of our member school boards while ensuring that the voices of all our members are heard and acknowledged in MTSBA's advocacy.
2. Maintain a focus on and reserve its resources to address issues of statewide impact and concern in its advocacy and maintain neutrality on issues of limited statewide impact that divide our members. When issues of limited statewide impact involve division among our members, MTSBA advocacy must be limited to providing information to all of our affected members on an equitable and neutral basis.
3. Identify and attempt to resolve division within our membership whenever possible through neutral facilitation of dialogue and transparent provision of information to its members.

Appendix “A” To MTSBA’s Principles and Guidelines References for MTSBA Principles & Guidelines

Principle I --

- Montana Constitution, Article X, section 1
- Core Purpose of MTSBA, Strategic Plan
- Core Purpose of the basic system of free quality schools, K-12 Vision Project

Principle II –

- Montana Constitution, Article X, Section 8, Locally-Elected Trustees
- Montana Constitution, Article X, Section 9, Board of Public Education
- Core Values, MTSBA
- Core Values, K-12 Vision Project

Principle III –

- Montana Constitution, Article X, Section 7
- MTSBA Core Values (balance in treating and addressing needs of members)

Principle IV –

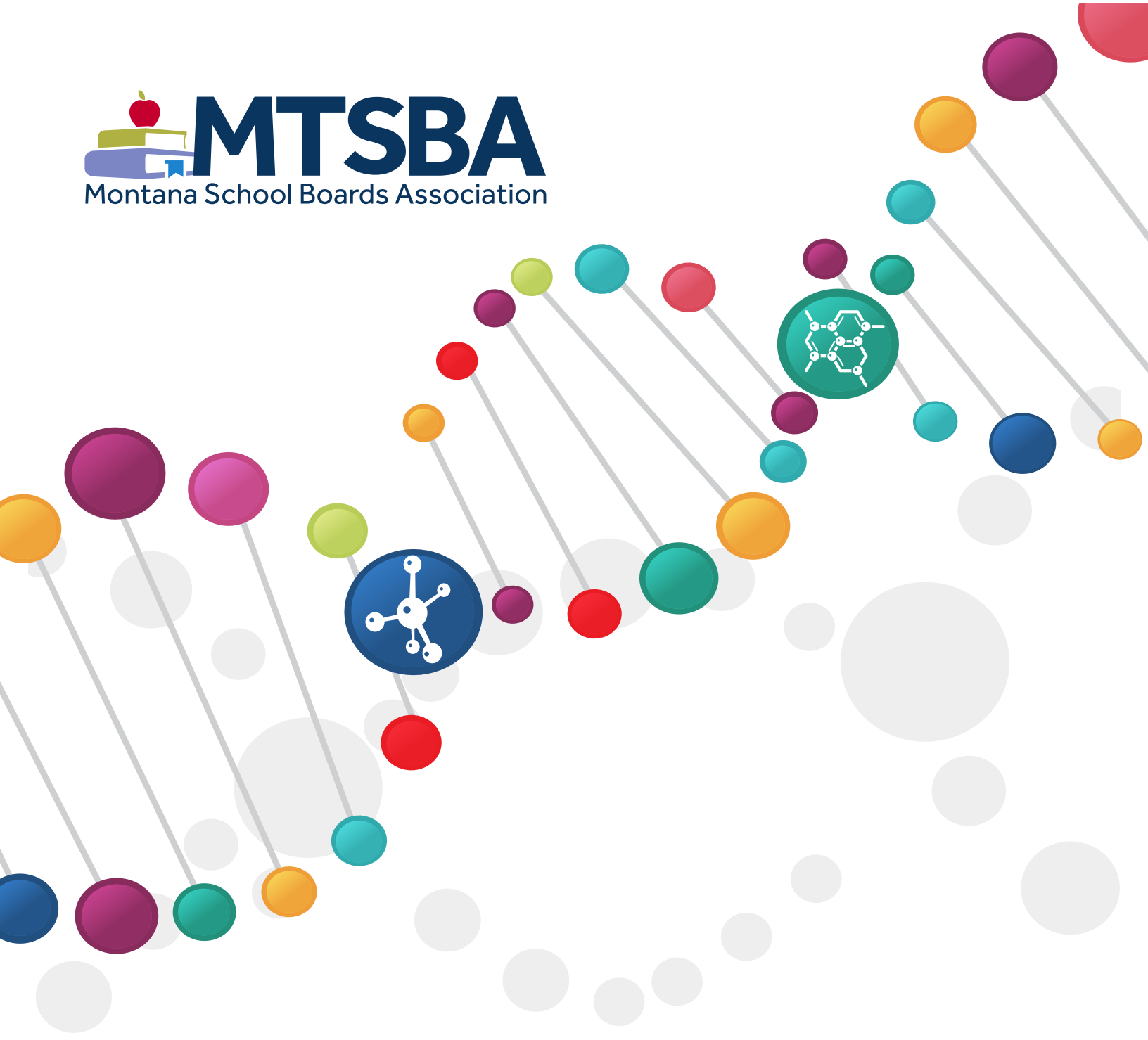
- Montana Constitution, Article X, Section 1(2)
- MTSBA Core Values
- K-12 Vision Project Core Values

Principle V –

- MCA, 20-5-109
- *Kennedy v. Bremerton School District* (2022) and other U.S. Supreme Court cases
- *Kaptein v. Conrad*

Principle VI –

- Montana Constitution, Article X, Section 8, elected trustees
- MTSBA Core Value: “We understand and respect the variety of circumstances in which our members govern, and the variety of perspectives held by our members. We strive to meet the needs of and balance the interests of each of our members.”
- MTSBA Board of Directors Goal Area 1 - Engaged and United Advocacy For *Each Child* in Every Public School



The Foundational Elements of MTSBA's Organizational DNA

Synthesized from common themes/fused elements reflected in the MTSBA Member Adopted Principles and Guidelines, the MTSBA Board's Strategic Plan, and the MTSBA Board's Specific, Methodical and Consistent Practices Recipe.



Key Sources of Authority for MTSBA

MTSBA Core Purpose:
To develop the full potential of each child through school board leadership.

MTSBA Specific, Methodical and Consistent (SMaC) Practices:

1. We focus on assisting our members with reaching the full potential of EACH CHILD;
2. Our Strategic Plan drives the work of the Board and the staff. We always look at what's coming up on the horizon that impacts our members, planning for changes and aligning our budgetary priorities with our strategic objectives;
3. We integrate knowledge-based decision-making in all member discussions/decisions, and we must ensure expanded involvement of our members in our decision-making processes;
4. We strive to implement solutions that collectively benefit our members, and which do not divide or disengage our membership, exercising fairness and balance in addressing the diverse needs of our members;
5. Each Director meaningfully participates and engages in the governance of the Association, effectively communicates with the membership and serves as an ambassador of MTSBA's programs and services;
6. We encourage leadership of individual champions on the Board of Directors who rise above and beyond the call of duty and inspire those serving with and for them;
7. The Board and staff work in collaboration for the collective benefit of our membership now and into the future;
8. We strategically devote the time and resources necessary to ensure outcomes consistent with our core purpose;
9. We foster opportunities to develop personal relationships that strengthen the organization and enable us to meet challenges more effectively;
10. We continually adapt and innovate to meet the needs, wants and preferences of our members, to help our members succeed in promoting initiatives that support each student's success;
11. We instill trust and openness in our relations with each other and with our membership;
12. We prioritize professional development for the Board and staff;

MTSBA Core Values:

Visionary Leadership - We embrace vision and innovation in all that we do, continually adapting to the changing needs, wants and preferences of our members.

Advocacy - We advocate for EACH child in EVERY public school in Montana.

Empowered School Boards - We empower community engaged, elected school boards in their Constitutional mission to fulfill the potential of each child.

Member-Centric - We understand, respect, and balance the interests of each of our members.

Constitutional Guardian - We guard and defend all Article X constitutional guarantees for each child.

American Indian Peoples and Tribes - We help our members preserve the history and cultural integrity of American Indian Peoples and Tribes.

13. We take the lead in advocating for public education and EACH child served by our membership;
14. We advocate for and educate our members on the innovations that advance personalized learning for EACH child and efficient district operations;
15. We align our programs and services with our Core Purpose and Core Values; and
16. We deliberately choose and conform to a governance model of "representative of".

"Representative of": Board members who view their role as ensuring that the views, beliefs, values, and self-interests of the constituencies they know the best are on the table as part of the conversation. They voice interests and opinions of those they know best and vote on behalf of the best overall interests of the organization. We avoid a "representative for" model, by which board members see themselves as the elected representatives of a particular constituency. They voice only the self-interests and opinions of that constituency and vote only on behalf of that constituency's interests.

In Carrying Out our Work on Behalf of Our Members, the Montana School Boards Association:



Sees the world through the eyes of the elected trustee and dedicates its programs and services to helping school boards develop the full potential of EACH child in every public school in Montana.



Operates from a nonpartisan orientation in all that it does, determining its support for and opposition to proposals on the basis of alignment with strategic/member adopted priorities, and without regard to the positions of political parties or ideology regarding such proposals.



Is driven by its strategic planning and related processes and tightly aligns all that it does to the plan. We fully integrate strategy into everything we do.



Generates its success through the leadership of fully engaged, knowledgeable and selfless directors who work for the benefit of, are committed to understanding and who are devoted to equitably balancing and fulfilling the interests of all member districts. Our directors set aside the specific interests of their own school district and understand their obligation to serve all school districts in fulfilling the potential of EACH child in every public school.



Works for the collective benefit of its members, striving to create clarity and consensus regarding its key initiatives and exercising fairness and balance in addressing the diverse needs of our members.



Executes its strategy through advocacy, services, and innovation, demonstrating visionary leadership in and striving for excellence in all that we do.



Guards the constitutional guarantees afforded children in Article X of the Montana Constitution, including but not limited to:

- Opportunities for each child to fulfill their educational potential;
- The right of each child to access a basic system of free quality schools in every Montana community, adequately and equitably funded;
- A balanced structure of checks and balances between elected school boards, the Board of Public Education, and the Legislature; and
- A commitment to education regarding the preservation, appreciation and understanding of American Indian culture.



Operates with Transparency and Trust, providing our members with ready access and an open invitation to observe and hold us accountable for conducting ourselves in a manner that is consistent with our principles and to measure our successes and failures in the context of our adherence to the norms of behavior that have been defined and adopted by the MTSBA Board of Directors and its member school boards throughout the state.

MTSBA Member-Adopted Principles and Guidelines:

Principle I

Alignment of efforts and activities with the goal of developing the full educational potential of all the state's citizens while guaranteeing equality of educational opportunity to each person of the state

Principle II

Recognition of the shared authority for education between the community, locally elected school boards, and the bodies with constitutional authority and responsibility for education, including the Governor, the Montana Board of Public Education, and the Legislature

Principle III

Equality of Educational Opportunity for each person of the state

Principle IV

Recognition and commitment to the preservation of the distinct and unique cultural heritage of American Indians

Principle V

Balance between Church and State

Principle VI

Collaboration among and with our locally elected school boards



About the Impressive Contributions of our Members

The founding of Montana's public schools pre-dates Montana's statehood by 25 years.

Creation of a system of public schools was one of the first actions of the First Montana Territorial Legislative Assembly in 1864.

Since the first public school opened in Virginia City in 1865, **Montana's public schools have been preparing Montana children for a future of success over the last 150 years**, governed by community-elected trustees all along the way.

Over 1,450

elected trustees in Montana volunteer nearly 750,000 hours each year in pursuit of increased student achievement, taking on complex and sometimes controversial challenges **with no compensation whatsoever.**

The **combined annual volunteer service of our members would take an individual 86 continuous years, working 24 hours per day**, to match.

When we say that our members provide a lifetime of service each year, we mean that literally.

Our members' annual contributions are **equivalent to 360 FTE positions provided free of charge each year**, providing taxpayers **over \$14 million in savings each year** compared to what those positions would cost if filled by employees.

Our **members oversee the employment of over 25,000 public employees** who educate, support, transport supervise, feed and protect the safety of over **155,000+ children**, in virtually every community in the state, every day of the week throughout the school year.

Our boards govern for **excellence and efficiency in equal measures** and the results of their efforts speak for themselves.

Montana's public schools provide performance that compares favorably by any measure, nationally or even internationally and our **members deliver these results for below average costs** when compared to other states in our Nation.

Our members **ensure preservation and fulfillment of important constitutional guarantees afforded Montana's citizens.**



FY2023 Financial Report

Montana School Boards Association

Lance L. Melton
Executive Director
Montana School Boards Association

Prepared for June 2024 Annual Meeting

Core Purpose of the Montana School Boards Association:

***“To develop the full potential of each child
through school board leadership.”***

Article IV, Section 11

MTSBA Bylaws

SECTION 11. ANNUAL AUDIT. The Board of Directors of this Corporation shall provide for an annual audit by a certified public accountant of all its resources and expenditures. A full report of such audit and financial status shall be given at each annual meeting.

Auditor's Opinion, FY23 and FY22 MTSBA Financial Statements

WIPFLI

Independent Auditor's Report

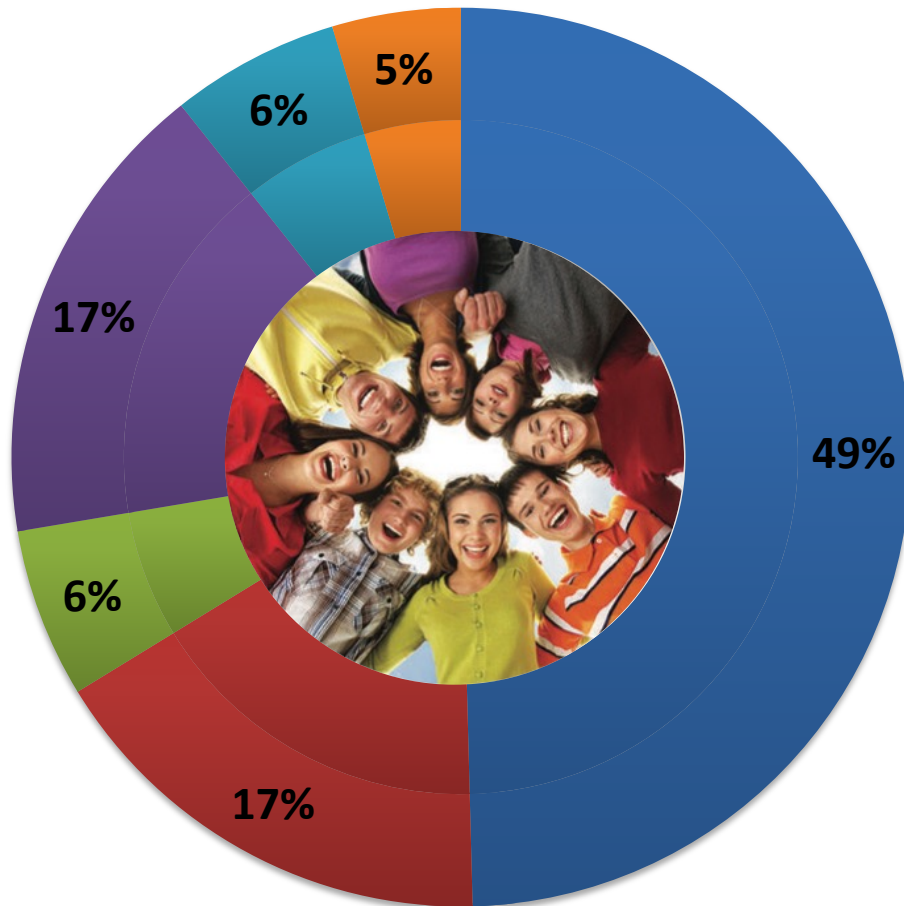
Board of Directors
Montana School Boards Association
Helena, MT

Opinion

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Montana School Boards Association (the "MTSBA"), a nonprofit organization, which comprise the statements of financial position as of June 30, 2023 and 2022, and the related statements of activities, functional expenses, and cash flows for the years then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements.

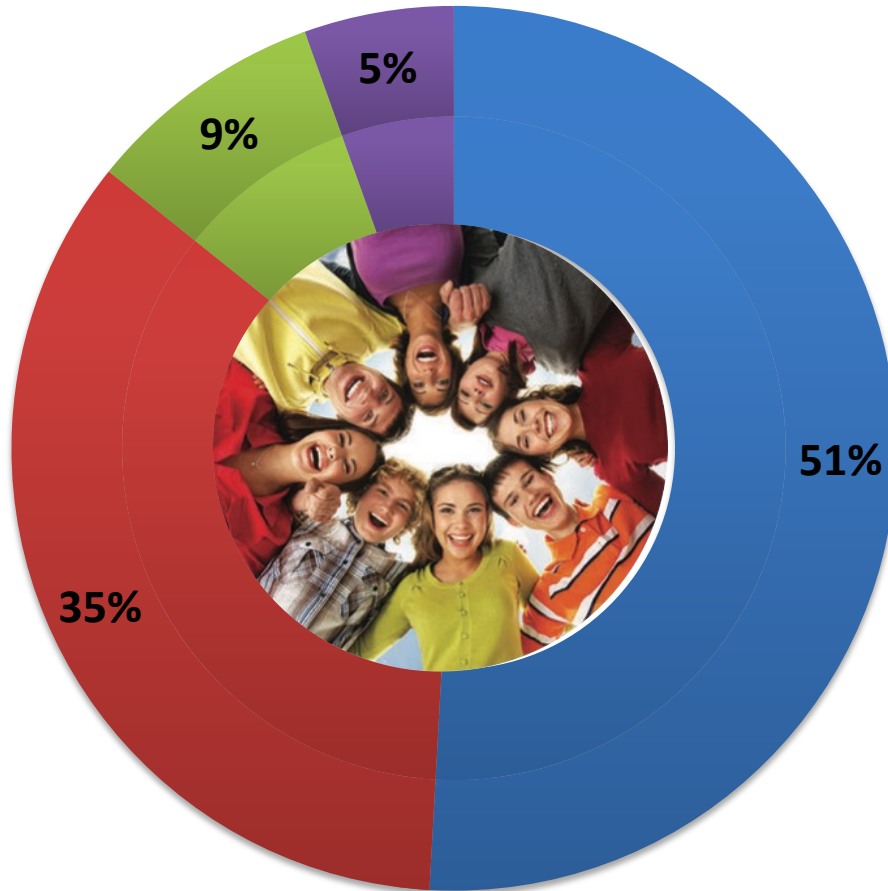
In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Montana School Boards Association as of June 30, 2023 and 2022, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the years then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America ("GAAP").

MTSBA FY23 Revenues



- Administration of Member Insurance Programs
- Fee-Based Services Other than Training
- Workshops and Annual Conference
- Membership Dues
- Royalties
- Investment Income

MTSBA FY23 Expenses



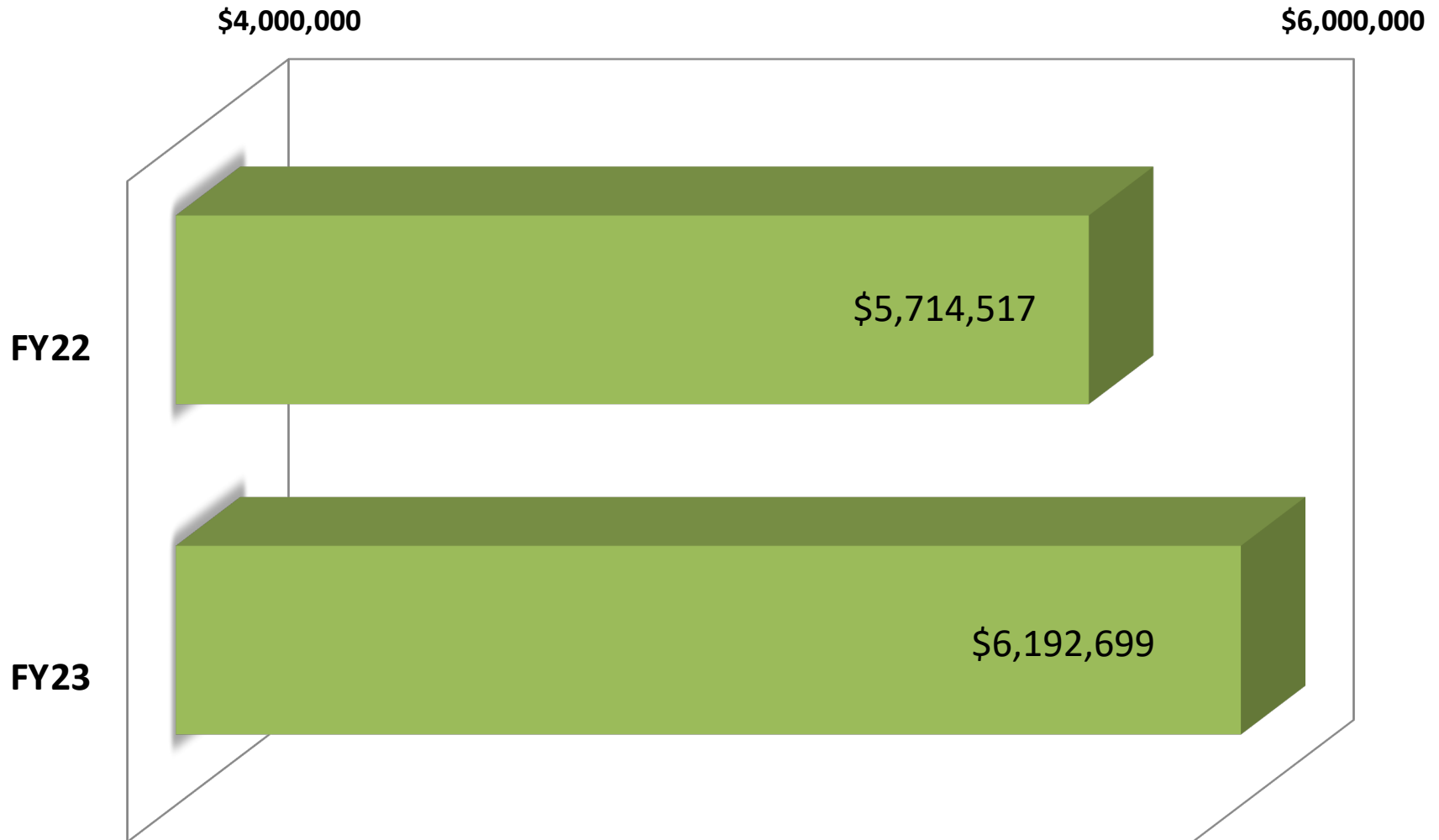
- Administration of Member Insurance Programs
- Cost of Employing Education Services Staff
- Travel, Member Communications, Service and Outreach
- Miscellaneous (Office Operations, Depreciation, Accounting, Insurance, etc.)

MTSBA Board Policy 395

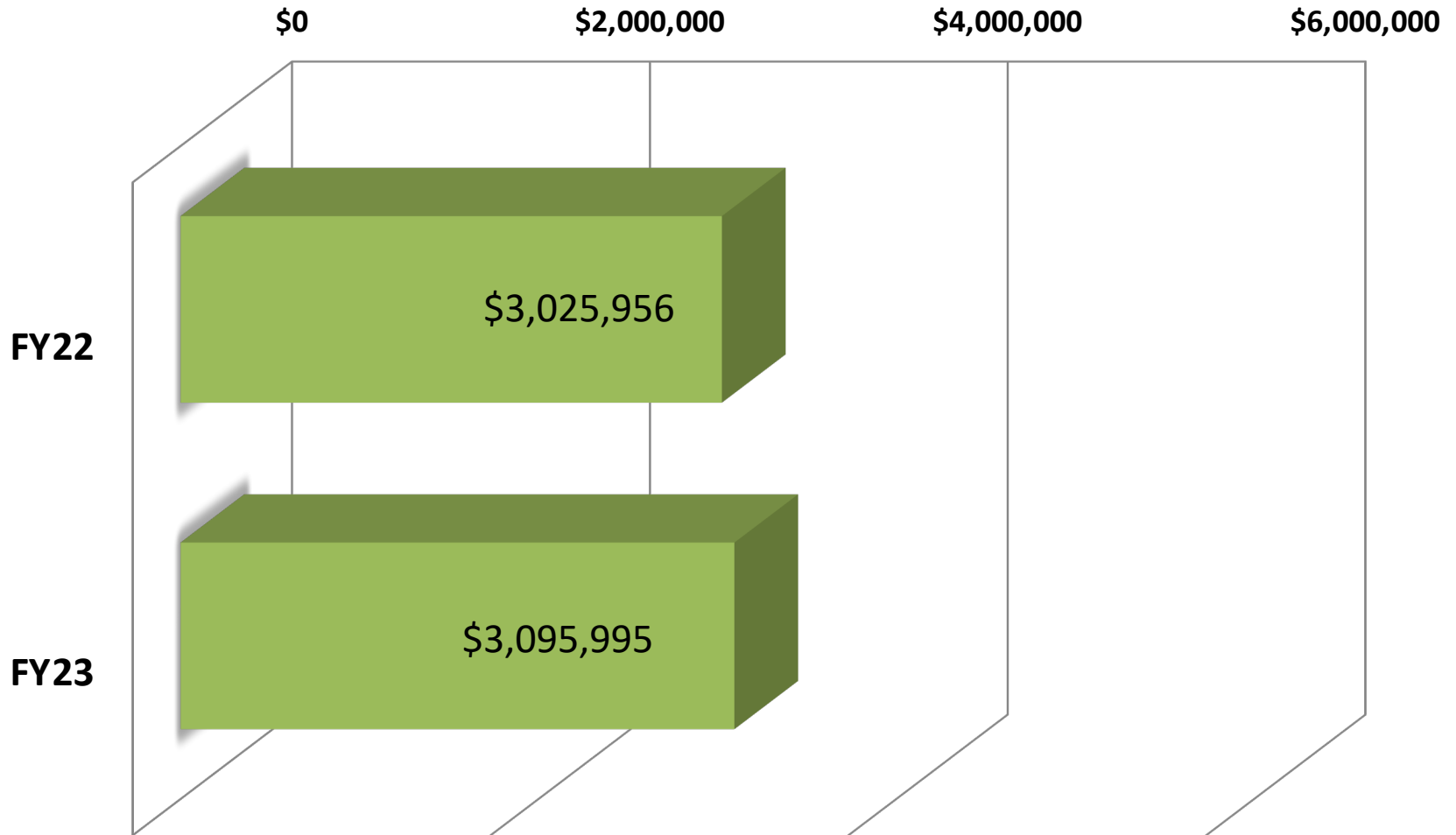
The long-term goal of the MTSBA board is to attain and sustain overall net assets, consisting of a combination of long term and current assets, as calculated on line 22 of IRS form 990, sufficient to:

1. avoid debt on our real property improvements;
2. reserve sufficient long-term capital necessary to allow for periodic replacement of long-term assets; and
3. attain and sustain net cash equivalent to the greater of:
 - a. 75% of its annual operating budgeted expenditures; or
 - b. the median reserve to budget ratio among other comparable nonprofit organizations identified in the then-current annual study on nonprofit investing (S.O.N.I. - <http://www.npinvesting.org>)

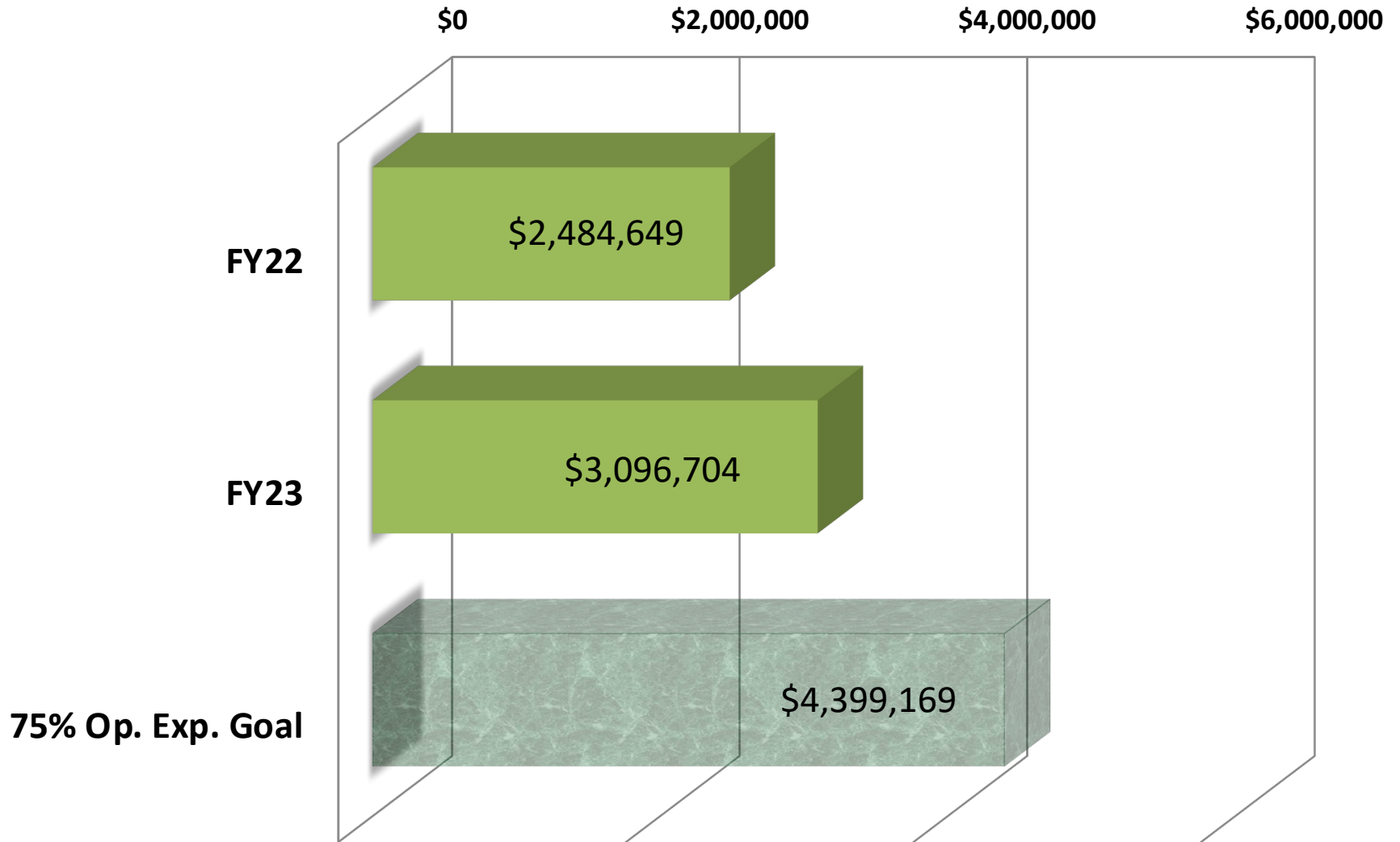
MTSBA Net Assets as of June of Fiscal Year Includes Property, Equipment and Cash



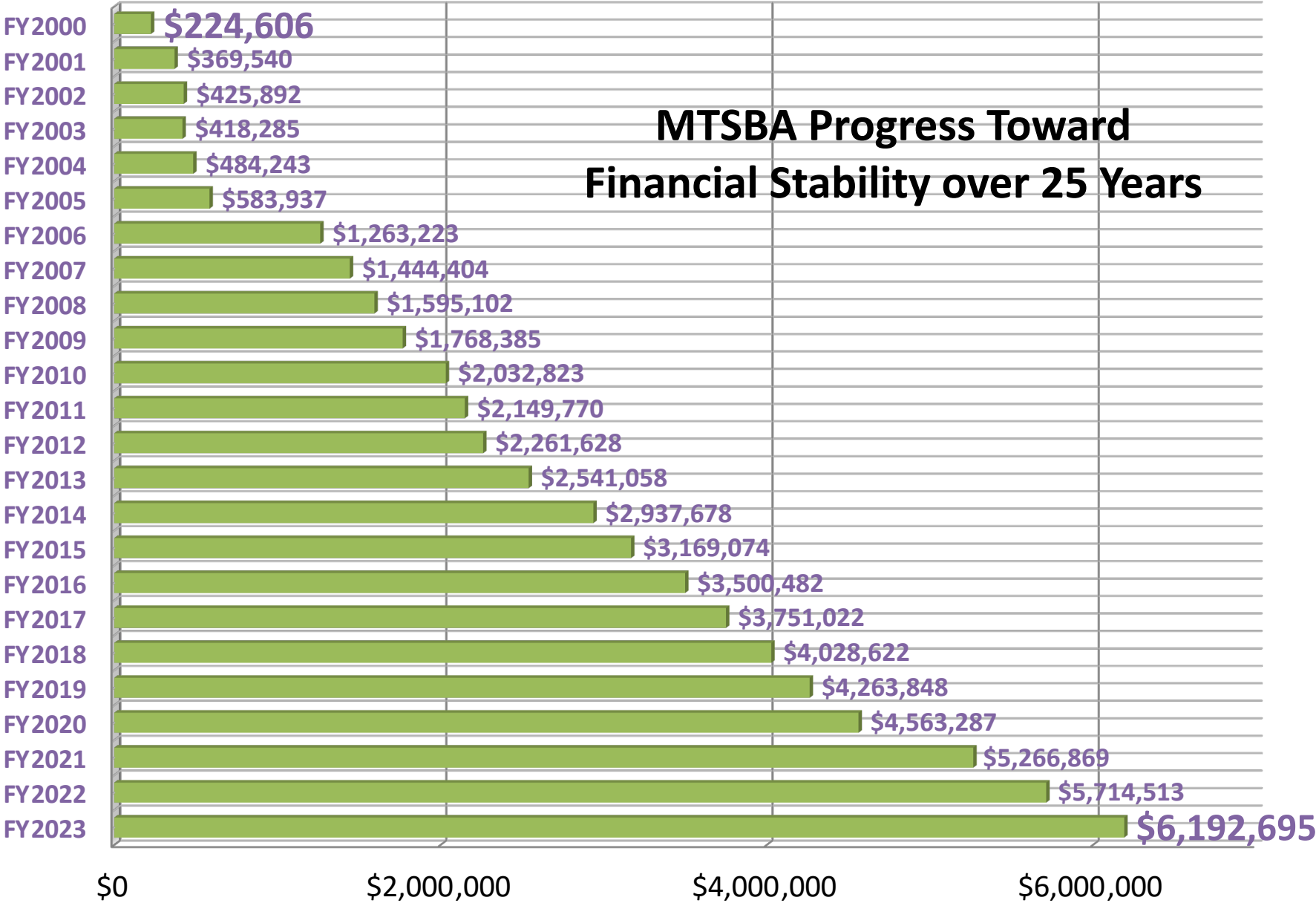
MTSBA Net Building and Equipment Value as of June 30 of Fiscal Year



MTSBA Net Cash as of June 30 of Fiscal Year



MTSBA Progress Toward Financial Stability over 25 Years



Summary

- MTSBA has enjoyed sound financial health throughout FY23, with a clean audit finding and continued improvement and expansion of services.
- Our FY24 trends are consistent with past performance as of the end of May 2024 and should further contribute to MTSBA's financial health and capacity for service on behalf of our members.
- Thank You MTSBA Members! *It is a pleasure to serve each of you!*





TO: MTSBA Members
FROM: Lance Melton, Executive Director
RE: Dues Revenue Estimate for FY2026
DATE: May 21, 2024

Pursuant to the MTSBA Bylaws, below is a dues revenue estimate for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024. This year, in light of the budget challenges facing our members, the MTSBA Board requested that I adjust the formula to keep the overall increase in dues revenue for MTSBA at \$0, which I have accomplished as noted below. There will still be some districts that will see some increase in their dues, many more that will see decreases or no increase, as the formula remains connected to member spending in each district.

The MTSBA Board brings a seconded motion to the annual meeting in support of this revision to the dues formula.

Refresher Regarding How MTSBA Dues are Calculated:

The MTSBA bylaws include a dues formula that is based on total current spending by each member three years preceding the year to which the dues apply. We remove all capital expenditures from the calculation, and we also remove any consideration of ESSER funds in either the base year or the final year from which the dues are calculated. The three year lag between the year of spending vs. the year of dues to which such spending applies is to ensure that we are relying on audited data submitted by OPI to the National Center for Education Statistics.

Recommended Change:

1. The MTSBA Board is proposing to reduce overall dues revenue by approximately \$7,140 through adjustments to the formula. A key in this regard is implementing a four year average of spending into the formula. So rather than adjusting the formula based on a one year increase in expenditures three years preceding the year to which the dues apply as we do now, we would compare a four year average of expenditures. Illustration:
2. **Current:** MTSBA compares growth in current spending from FY22 to FY23 to compute the inflationary increase to floors, caps and flat rates. The current model is generating an inflationary factor of 4.6%.
3. **Proposed:** MTSBA would compare growth in current spending from an average of current spending in FY19-22 to an average of spending in FY20-23.
4. This proposed model in combination with the other changes referenced below is estimated to reduce dues expense to our members and revenues to MTSBA from FY2025 to FY2026 by approximately \$7,136.
5. The chart on the following page identifies the various assessment rates, floors, caps, and flat rates as they would be set in the bylaws after member approval. The chart below is in a proposed adjusted form as specified in the Bylaws and is presented for your consideration and approval.

Proposed Dues Formula, Year to Year Reduced Revenues of approximately \$7,140				
Four Most Recent Expenditure Years Average Spending Low	Four Most Recent Expenditure Years Average Spending High	Assessment	Floor	Cap
\$0	\$500,000	Flat Rate	\$420	\$420
\$500,001	\$2,000,000	0.14%	\$420	\$2,750
\$2,000,001	\$5,000,000	0.11%	\$2,750	\$5,000
\$5,000,001	\$7,500,000	0.09%	\$5,000	\$5,750
\$7,500,001	\$10,000,000	0.08%	\$5,750	\$7,500
\$10,000,001	Above Floor, not 1 of 7 largest members	0.06%	\$7,500	\$14,500
Seven Largest Members	Flat Rate	Flat Rate	\$20,500	\$20,500
Coop Members	Flat Rate	Flat Rate	\$850	\$850

Impact of Estimate on MTSBA’s Budget for FY26

1. As noted above, dues expense of our members and revenue for MTSBA will decrease by approximately \$7,136, from \$1,136,529 in FY2025 to \$1,129,393 in FY2026.
2. If dues revenue followed increased member spending from FY2022 to FY2023 under the existing formula, dues revenue would have increased by \$52,280. Instead, this proposal will decrease dues revenue by \$7,136. **This represents a combined savings to our members of approximately \$59,400.**
3. With current inflation running at 3.8% and with dues representing approximately 19% of MTSBA’s budgeted revenues, MTSBA will have to implement cost containment strategies and/or draw on reserves to address this gap between inflationary costs and revenues. MTSBA recognizes that its members are in similar circumstances in this regard and is pleased to do its part to ensure that MTSBA membership remains a great bargain for the elected school boards and their key staff in each community.
4. MTSBA has approximately \$1.7 million in expenses that don’t generate any revenues for MTSBA, and dues help pay for programs that do not generate revenues but that provide tremendous value for our members. Examples of the categories of expense that do not generate revenues include the cost of operating the MTSBA Board and engaging in COSSBA, member outreach, the cost of owning and operating the building, advocacy before the Legislature and Congress and the cost of corresponding staff that do not generate revenues but who provide valuable services that are core to our Mission.
5. MTSBA makes up the several hundred thousand dollar gap between dues revenue and non-revenue generating expenses through fees generated by voluntary member selection of MTSBA services, royalties, and contracts with our Insurance Programs that provide our members with access to extensive fee-free services, all of which have been extensively documented and transparently outlined to our members in the membership value infographic.

Thank you in advance for reviewing this memo and let me know if you have any questions.

Vision-Based Strategic Advocacy

Multi-Year Strategic Advocacy Resolution 2 25 2 2

Adopted July 2023

Proposed changes are underlined in highlight and redline.

BE IT RESOLVED that MTSBA follow a vision-based strategic advocacy process in developing and executing its legislative priorities in each legislative session.

1. MTSBA will convene and facilitate its members in ongoing strategic dialogue to ensure the ongoing relevance and value of its advocacy efforts before the Montana Legislature and other bodies impacting the constitutional rights, authorities and obligations under the Montana Constitution. MTSBA shall incorporate expanded consensus among all affected stakeholders with a focus on developing the full potential of each child in every public school and incorporating outreach to and engagement by teachers and administrators who have fostered high student achievement and successfully implemented available flexibilities.
2. MTSBA will strive to ensure alignment between its priorities and corresponding priorities of other constitutionally empowered bodies to support transformative strategies that will support Montana's public schools in their mission to develop the full educational potential of each person and to ensure equality of educational opportunity for all children.
3. MTSBA shall study and provide references to and consider the adoption of priorities and strategic direction of other comparable strategic efforts at supporting public education, such as the National Conference of State Legislatures' "The Time is Now" initiative.
4. MTSBA efforts must include both development of internal clarity and consensus regarding the desired future for Montana's public schools and external outreach, collaboration with and pursuit of common goals with the Legislature, Board of Public Education, Governor and State Superintendent.
5. MTSBA shall route internal efforts through MTSBA's K-12 Vision Project and will engage our member trustees, administrators, clerks, and teachers from all MTSBA caucus groups.
6. MTSBA shall collaborate in a full partnership with the organizational partners in the Coalition of Advocates for Montana's Public Schools to ensure broad consensus and strategic alignment of our advocacy, focused on the best interests of the children we serve in Montana's Public Schools.
7. MTSBA shall facilitate the work of the K-12 Vision Project using knowledge-based decision making processes, emphasizing careful, deliberate and comprehensive analysis of issues, the use of open dialogue prior to deliberation, pursuit of insight regarding wants, needs and preferences of our members, consideration of the ethical implications of our choices and mitigation of disadvantage to all stakeholders.
8. MTSBA shall initiate outreach efforts to broaden and heighten awareness of the work of the K-12 Vision Project and the efforts of the Coalition of Advocates for Montana's Public Schools, including a combination of public opinion polling, facilitated community dialogue, outreach to business, higher education and other community leaders and public awareness campaigns.
9. MTSBA's overall advocacy efforts must always include: An ongoing analysis of the gaps between the vision for success under Article X of the Montana Constitution and the reality of and any impediments created by laws governing and resources provided to Montana's public schools; and
10. Development of proposals to resolve the gaps between the vision for success and current realities.

**Gap Analysis Resolution for 2025 Legislature
Adopted by the MTSBA Members, July 2023**

With Amendments Drafted by the MTSBA Advocacy Committee, November 2023

Preliminary draft of proposed changes authored by the MTSBA Advocacy Committee to:

- 1. address the 95 mills controversy.**
- 2. address current regulatory interference in enrollment counts and roll outs of new legislation by OPI.**
- 3. Move previous progress from the body of the resolution to an appendix.**
- 4. incorporate issues identified by Columbia Falls and Bozeman Public Schools.**

Proposed changes are underlined in highlight and redline.

Gap Analysis, Post-2023 Legislative Session

Analyze and resolve gaps between the vision for success under Article X of the Montana Constitution and the reality of laws governing and resources provided to Montana's public schools.

Goals for MTSBA's Advocacy in the 2025 Interim

3. Broaden member awareness of the changes in law, including both new opportunities and challenges, to help members perform at high levels and work under new changes in the law.
 - a. HB 203 - open public school enrollment;
 - b. HB 214 - access to online learning and multidistrict agreements;
 - c. HB 396 - part time enrollment guarantees;
 - d. HB 504 - standardization of grievance policies;
 - e. HB 676 and SB 518 – Parental rights and obligation of districts to advise parents of available innovations and flexibilities.
 - f. HB 117 - Expand working retiree options under TRS.
 - g. HB 257 - Expand funding for advanced opportunities program.
 - h. HB 321 – GTB subsidies for major maintenance levies.
 - i. HB 332 \$40 million for startup funds for school health trust.
 - j. HB 352 – Targeted intervention – strategies for startup.
 - k. HB 408 – Marketing innovative education tax credits.
 - l. HB 549 – Separate basic entitlement for charter schools.
 - m. HB 587 – Demonstrating care for taxpayers through 95 mills.
 - n. HB 588 – Changes to the TEACH Act.
 - o. HB 749 – Expanded course access through Montana Digital Academy.
 - p. HB 833 - Teacher residency program.
 - q. SB 70 – Broader qualifications for Quality Educator Loan Assistance Program.
 - r. SB 213 - Threat assessment teams and training for school and student safety and security.

- s. SB 373 - Alternative teacher credentialing licensure.
 - t. SB 444 - Protecting unpaid internships for work-based learning.
4. Advocate for school friendly guidance and supportive startup funding to assist school districts generate the initial funds needed to create targeted intervention programs. Efforts must be consistent with the fiscal note for HB 352, Section 9 language in the bill evidencing legislative intent for FY24 funding and collaboration with OPI. This could include urging OPI to spend its ESSER learning loss funds to support start up efforts of school districts implementing targeted intervention programs and/or urging our members to do the same. FY24 provides a unique and soon to expire opportunity for school districts to use learning loss funds that will expire September 2024 to fund a targeted intervention-aligned exceptional circumstances enrollment program in FY24, and then use the ANB generated off such operation in FY25 to initiate a formal HB 352 targeted intervention early childhood education program.
 5. Through membership in MQEC, initiate legal challenges of bills passed by the 2023 Legislature that impinge on constitutional guarantees afforded children, voters and taxpayers under the Montana Constitution.
 - a. HB 393 Special Needs Savings Account. Article V, Section 11(5) prohibition on appropriation of funds for private purposes or to private parties.
 - b. HB 562 Charter Schools without popularly elected trustees, general supervision of the board of public education and with elections that violate the Article IV, Section 2 definition of qualified elector.
 6. Broaden member awareness and prepare for engagement on issues unresolved in the 2023 Legislative Session that are likely to come back next session.
 - a. HB 774, revising elections for occurrence every two years in even years in November.
 - b. HB 502, 566, 837 and free conference activity on human sexuality instruction and “identity instruction” and the concept of curricular opt outs vs. opt ins.
 - c. HB 501 – State superintendent determination regarding which textbook dealers can sell books in Montana.
 - d. State Superintendent variety of proposals seeking to use gross neglect of duty to deter public school employees from instruction on topics.
 - e. HB 690 – Revise Pupil Data Privacy, Address Facial Recognition Technology. Even though this bill failed, pupil privacy and the use of facial recognition technology in public schools will remain visible throughout the interim and could become the target of legislation during the interim or during the next legislative session.
 7. Advocate for the preservation of the revenue from the 95 mills that was incorporated into the Legislature’s official revenue estimate through HJ2 and appropriated in House Bill 2 but which is now at risk as a result of the counties’ refusal to collect the 95 mills calculated by the Department of Revenue. Support litigation by MQEC regarding the issue. Regardless of the outcome of such litigation, MTSBA must work to ensure that the \$80 million annual decrease in funding from the collection of 78 instead of 95 mills by the counties is restored and that the school funding formula is equitable and adequate

for a system of quality schools empowered to develop the full potential of each child in every public school.

8. Ensure against regulatory interference and mistakes in OPI's implementation of House Bill 549 charter schools, House Bill 352 targeted early literacy programs and modernization of OPI's data systems upon which schools rely for accurately and sufficiently capturing enrollment counts that are used to establish budgeted ANB for districts and that must accommodate and avoid discrimination that is prohibited by section 20-7-1601 against personalized and proficiency based learning programs that do not rely on seat time calculations to calculate ANB under 20-9-311(4)(d) and 20-1-301, MCA.

Goals for MTSBA's Advocacy in the 2025 Legislative Session

Preserve Previous Progress: MTSBA shall monitor and work to preserve and protect the constitutional role of elected school boards and valuable provisions of existing law previously passed pursuant to MTSBA resolutions. We anticipate that increasing polarization over public schools nationwide will continue to yield legislative proposals seeking to infringe on the constitutional authority and obligations vested in elected school boards by the people of Montana under Article X of the Montana Constitution.

MTSBA continues to support and rely on the definition of quality in 20-9-309 as currently written to ensure the constitutional guarantees afforded children under Article X of the Montana Constitution. MTSBA has also collaborated with other public education advocates and with the legislative and executive branches of government to achieve significant improvements in current law that we must protect against attacks. **Progress from previous sessions over the last several years is reflected in an appendix to this resolution for reference.**

2. Ensure a Structure of Shared Authority that Matches the Intent of Constitutional Framers:

- a. MTSBA shall increase awareness among public policy makers and the public regarding the interrelationships and shared and obligations of the Montana Legislature, the Board of Public Education, the State Superintendent and Elected School Boards for ensuring a constitutionally compliant system of public education that develops the full potential of each person. The people of Montana have commissioned and assigned responsibilities to each of these groups to ensure that the peoples' goal of developing the full potential of each person is within reach. The authority and obligation of community elected school boards to supervise and control public schools in each community is a power specifically greater than the power to generally supervise schools as vested in the board of public education. It remains important for MTSBA to remain vigilant in preserving the authority of

supervision and control by elected school boards against proposals to infringe on that authority introduced before the Legislature and/or the Board of Public Education.

- b. MTSBA shall identify and seek changes to all laws that are inconsistent with the intent of the people in adopting Article X of the Montana Constitution, ensuring codification of proper roles and scope of authority for all branches of government sharing a duty of fidelity to fulfilling the goals and guarantees afforded children under Article X of the Montana Constitution. MTSBA shall source its position on such issues by relying on guidance as to the proper role, balances of power and interrelationships among constitutionally empowered parties from the verbatim transcript of the Montana Constitutional Convention of 1972, with particular emphasis on portions of that transcript related to the adoption of Article X, Section 8 vesting supervision and control of public education in each community in elected school boards.¹

¹ These are all from Volume VI of the Constitutional Convention Notes, Verbatim Transcript March 9, 1972 - March 16, 1972

Page 2046 is where the delegates first considered what has become Article X, Section 8. Delegate George Heliker, who was an economics professor at the University of Montana moved: I move to amend Section 8 of the Education and Public Lands Committee Proposal on page 5, line 24, after the word and punctuation 'elections': 'The supervision and control of schools in each school district shall be vested in a school board.'

Page 2046 – Heliker says that the fear has been expressed that local school boards would lose autonomy unless added to the Constitution. He also drew a parallel between the authority he was suggesting be provided to local school boards and the authority that the committee had previously granted to the board of regents.

"The committee proposal in Section 11 provides for autonomy to a certain extent for the Board of Regents, which they propose to establish as a constitutional board. And I feel, therefore, that we should give constitutional recognition and status to the local boards to-first of all, to allay the fears which have been expressed, which I think are well founded, concerning the preservation of local autonomy; and secondly, to give parallel treatment to the governing boards of the public schools, as well as the public universities and colleges."

Page 2046-2047 - Richard Champoux, Delegate, a professor at Flathead Valley College and a Senate Democrat, added the following comments, noting a specific intent to reduce the power of the Board of Public Education over what it had been under the 1899 Constitution:

"I have also felt that there is quite a bit of fear on the part of many delegates here, and no matter what we say, perhaps they'd still have that fear that the local school districts are going to lose some control and some power. And if you'll note in my remarks to the-when we get to 9,10 and 11, you will note that we have even eliminated the word "control" in the new Public Board of Education, where it is in the old Constitution, and only use the word "supervise", By this amendment the intent is shown, I think, that this delegate-this body does want local control to remain with the local school districts, and I heartily support it."

Page 2048 – Reflects the proposal was adopted unanimously.

Page 2050 – Delegate Champoux emphasizes the deliberate reduction in power of the Board of Public Education vis-à-vis local school boards by reiterating that the removal of authority to "control" by the Board of Public Education was deliberate.

"I want you to notice, in this Number 9, if you look at the old section of the Constitution, it talks about supervision and control. In this section we have left out the word "control". Again, we want to emphasize that we want the local public school boards to have as much power as possible."

Page 2051 – Delegate Champoux addresses the relationship between the power of the Board of Public Education and local school boards:

The fear has been expressed that a separate board for public education might usurp the powers of local boards. There is no reason to be concerned about such a possibility-however, since the powers granted the state board would be almost identical to those now granted, and what we have just done is to guarantee the control by the local board at the local level. Indeed, the committee has actually deleted the word "control" from the powers and granted-now granted the board, so that the new section reads: "exercise general

3. Focus on resolving the following preliminary list of identified gaps between the promise of quality in Article X of the Montana Constitution and the current realities set forth in law:
- a. Pursue changes in law to correct the deficiency in the current method of calculating annual inflation-related adjustments to K-12 BASE aid pursuant to 20-9-326, MCA. Current deficiencies include:
 - i. the 3% cap on inflation in 20-9-326(2);
 - ii. The incorporation of stale inflation data from 3-4 years prior to calculate projected inflation for each biennium; and
 - iii. the use of the CPI-U index, which measures the increased cost of items purchased by the average consumer, rather than a more educationally relevant index aligned with the inflationary costs of employee compensation and benefits that make up 85% of all school expenditures.Examples of refinements in the law that should be considered for legislation include, but should not be limited to removal or triggered-release of the 3% cap on inflation that is significantly above 3%; use of the cost of employment index to calculate inflation; and use of a more compressed, recent calculation of inflation no more than 2 years prior to the year to which such inflation applies in calculating K-12 BASE Aid.
 - b. Increase the schedule of maximum reimbursement by mileage rates specified in section 20-10-141 by 60% to reflect the 20 year (2003-2023) period during which the current schedule remained flat since it was first passed into law in Senate Bill 424, 2003 Legislative Session, and apply inflation calculated in accordance with section 20-3-326, MCA to the schedule for years beyond FY26.
 - c. Increase the State's share of Special Education costs by providing guaranteed tax base aid support for the portion of tuition levies implemented by school districts to pay for excess costs of providing a free appropriate public education to children with disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) that are beyond the funding provided by the state and federal government for IDEA compliance.
 - d. Explore access to alternative tax revenue sources that will relieve the pressure and undue tax burden shouldered by residential property taxpayers to fund Montana's public schools.
 - e. Increase the state's support of school district costs of building and maintaining facilities to serve the children educated in Montana's public schools. Legislative efforts should reflect implementation of updates to the most recent statewide school facilities study in 2008. The level of financial support committed for such expenditures should align to key findings of the 2008 study, including:
 - i. Over 2,000 school buildings in Montana;

supervision over the public school system." It would be difficult to argue that this grants any additional powers to the state board at the expense of local school boards.

- ii. Over 31 million square feet of real property improvements in Montana's public schools;
 - iii. The average age of school buildings in 2008 was over 50 years, with a large percentage of Montana's public school buildings built in the 1950's and 1960's. The average age of school facilities has undoubtedly increased further over the last 15 years.
- f. Expand awareness of the necessary incorporation of building blocks associated with a quality education that are referenced in the definition of quality in 20-9-309 but insufficiently addressed through the funding formula, including:
- i. Extracurricular activities/athletics as a right that is clearly subject to constitutional protection;
 - ii. Nursing and health services required to meet requirements in some IEP/504 plans in compliance with the prohibition in 20-9-309 on discrimination on the basis of disability under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation act of 1973;
 - iii. 6th grade comprehensive middle school programming aligned with the accreditation standards regarding middle school accreditation and in recognition of the characterization in 20-9-309 of the accreditation standards as the minimum standards upon which the basic system of free quality schools is built;
 - iv. Extra graduation requirements beyond what is required by accreditation standards, but are allowed under 20-9-309(2)(h), MCA in furtherance of the proper role of the accreditation standards as minimum standards that do not fully define the obligations of the Legislature or the rights of students;
 - v. Excess costs associated with providing school lunch and breakfast services with an emphasis on at-risk students as referenced in 20-9-309 and as defined in 20-1-101;
 - vi. Support services--school secretaries, custodians, paraprofessionals, business office, tech department staff, etc. as referenced in 20-9-309(3); and
 - vii. All cost increases in excess of the approved inflationary factors, including educationally relevant cost adjustments to better address the following educationally-relevant adjustments referenced in 20-9-309:
 - 1. the needs of isolated schools with low population density;
 - 2. the needs of urban schools with high population density;
 - 3. the needs of American Indian students; and
 - 4. the ability of school districts to attract and retain qualified educators and other personnel.

Appendix Documenting Previous Progress

MTSBA shall continue its ongoing efforts that we started in the 2009 Legislative Session to resolve findings of Judge Sherlock in his order in *Columbia Falls Elementary v. State (Columbia Falls II)*. Although Judge Sherlock denied supplemental relief sought by MQEC, he also entered the following findings:

118. Throughout this document, the Court has noted many improvements to the situation that existed in 2004. The Court has also noted that some problems remain. As just noted, this Court, given the efforts of the State and the difficulty of providing an adequate remedy at this time, chooses not to grant any supplemental relief. However, as loath as this Court is to provide an advisory opinion, it will make a few comments so as to avoid future problems.

119. By and large, the Court finds that the State has done a good job of addressing the problems earlier addressed. Following are some of the problems the Court sees that could cause this Court's conclusion to be reversed in the future. According to Exhibit 784, the State has made excellent contributions to ongoing State aid from 2005 through 2008. However, beginning in fiscal year 2009, the increase in the amount of State aid will drop to 1.9 percent. In order to avoid future problems, this figure should reflect to the trend of 2005-2008.

120. Next, although the total State aid to the school districts' general funds has increased from 2004 until today, the Court notes a slight relapse in 2009, as set forth in Finding of Fact 88, above. In the view of this Court, this figure should not be declining, but should either be increasing or at least staying the same.

121. The costs of special education need to be addressed. This Court noted in Finding of Fact 72, above, that Exhibit 549 shows that State appropriations for special education have fallen far short of the growth in costs. The increased competition for general fund dollars between special and general education continues.

122. In Finding of Fact 86, this Court noted the continuing problems with the recruitment and retention of teachers in isolated districts. While the State has made progress in this regard, it would be helpful if more could be done to ease these problems. As noted, increasing salaries for rural and isolated district would have a noticeable impact on recruitment and retention problems.

Specific legislation previously passed through MTSBA efforts (in collaboration with others) pertaining to the above findings include:

1. 2011 Legislative Session: MTSBA successfully drafted and passed Senate Bill 329, allowing school districts to form multi-district agreements. The most

notable improvement here was a change in the law granting unified school systems greater flexibility in committing funds throughout their K-12 school systems. School districts throughout the state have used this law, not only to qualify for state incentive funding, but to also level out the difficulties of budgets that go hand in hand with enrollment fluctuations. MTSBA designed this increased flexibility consistent with Judge Sherlock's ruling in 2008 where he identified that drawing on other fund balances was a means by which schools should be able to respond to spikes in inflation during a biennium that were above inflation calculated under the law.

2. 2013 Legislative Session:

a. SB 175: In addition to a prorated basic entitlement that provided school districts of all sizes with millions in new funding, SB 175 also increased the basic and per-ANB entitlements, attained inflationary increases on portions of the formula that had been frozen since 2005, provided a new funding stream for student data systems, added a new natural resource development payment to mitigate local property taxes and provide a funding stream for school construction, and implemented:

i. Proficiency based ANB, with no seat time requirement.

This can help facilitate accelerated learning for gifted and talented students while freeing up resources to pay for dual credit courses for such students and to devote more time to individualized instruction.

ii. School board flexibility to increase its over BASE general fund levy without a vote, provided that the board reduces other non-voted levies by a corresponding amount.

iii. Immediate increased funding for school districts experiencing an unusual increase in enrollment with more meaningful thresholds than what existed under previous law.

b. SB 191: Allows a district to use the non-voted tuition fund to pay for any actual costs of providing a Free Appropriate Public Education to students qualifying for services under IDEA that are above the current federal, state and local funding streams available to serve such students. MTSBA drafted and supported passage of this legislation to address finding 121 from Judge Sherlock's 2008 ruling regarding the competition between general and special education. Schools today have access to \$28.5 million more for special education funding through the tuition levy than they did in 2013.

c. SB 348: Allows a district to transfer state or local revenue from any fund other than debt service or retirement to its building reserve fund and use the funds for enhancements to school safety and security.

3. 2015-2023 Legislative Sessions – After decades of funding K-12 public education last, after the Legislature first addressed every other key component

of House Bill 2, the Legislature started funding K-12 public education inflation as one of the first substantive bills of each session. Inflationary increases in the two years affected by the 2023 Legislature will reflect a full decade of this new trend of prioritizing funding for K-12 schools in state budgeting discussions that reverses a trend that persisted during the first 150 years of the operation of public schools in Montana (1865-2015).

4. 2017 Legislative Session:

- a. Senate Bill 103: Extended new flexibility for personalized learning at the system level. Removed the obligation to provide the aggregate hours of instruction to all students other than those not gaining proficiency. From this point forward, state law authorizes school districts to implement personalized learning paths with funding attached based on proficiency over content.
- b. Senate Bill 307: Created a new major maintenance funding stream of \$23 million annually, through a combination of nonvoted levy authority and guaranteed tax base support that pays for the majority of these total costs on a statewide basis.
- c. House Bill 647: Protected school districts against what would have otherwise been budget reductions of \$42 million. Used block grant funds to cover short term budget shortfalls and expanded guaranteed tax base aid from FY18-21 in a manner that provided tens of millions in savings to local property taxpayers on an annual basis. Through this bill and successor legislation, the GTB ratio has risen from 193% to 262% and local property taxes during the period covered (2017-2023) grew by only \$15 million statewide while state GTB support grew by over \$90 million.

5. 2019 Legislative Session:

- a. House Bill 211: Passed funding for educator loan repayments for schools facing critical quality educator shortages.
- b. House Bill 247: Authorized school districts to use major maintenance resources to service debt on major maintenance loans. Authorized new borrowing authority of over \$250 million for major maintenance projects.
- c. House Bill 351: Provided incentive funds to help pilot school districts converting to personalized learning models.
- d. House Bill 387: Increased career and technical education programming and funding, expanding to middle grades, authorizing matching non-voted adult education levy funds and more than doubling current CTE funding levels.
- e. House Bill 576: Increased flexibility over donated funds previously obligated to endowment funds. Expanded school district access to over \$30 million in such funds.

- f. Senate Bill 92: Expanded authorized use of funding transfers, major maintenance resources and authorized a new voted levy for operational and capital costs of school and student safety and security.

6. 2021 Session:

- a. House Bill 46: Applied the inflationary adjustment to the special education allowable cost payment and included it in the present law base in future biennia starting in the 2023 Legislative Session.
- b. House Bill 143: The TEACH Act. Provided a financial incentive to Montana public school districts to increase teacher base pay to attract early career teachers to Montana school districts. Funding through the quality educator payment for school districts meeting the legislative goals set forth in the bill adds to K-12 Base Aid for qualifying school districts.
- c. House Bill 246: Codified and expanded flexibilities in personalized learning and teacher licensure and enhanced the state's recognition of the constitutional power of elected school boards. The broadened definition of instruction in 20-1-101(17) took pressure off districts trying to compute their aggregate hours of instruction requirements amid the challenges of COVID-19.

7. 2023 Session

- a. HB 15 - Implement K-12 Inflation. Sustains a 10 consecutive year streak in which school funding is determined early in a legislative session, compared to previous trend where school funding would be determined last.
- b. HB 117 - Expand working retiree options under TRS. This removes red tape from the process of qualifying a person for working retiree status and expands coverage to administrative positions.
- c. HB 257 - Expand funding for advanced opportunities program. CTE funding is now at \$6 million per year, with \$4 million of the funds administered through advanced opportunity grants. This is an all-time high in CTE funding.
- d. HB 321 - \$73 million transfer to school facilities trust. The school facilities trust will now be \$200 million, and interest generated off that trust provides GTB-subsidize major maintenance levies and debt service payments on bonds approved by voters.
- e. HB 332 \$40 million for startup funds for statewide school health trust. The trust must qualify no later than June 30, 2026, to claim these funds.
- f. HB 352 - Implement targeted interventions starting at age 4 to support 3rd grade reading proficiency. This is groundbreaking for Montana in providing early childhood education on a formula basis focused on

early literacy. Options include any combination of a home based program (\$1,000), summer jump start program (120 hours for ¼ ANB) and a classroom program that can be either half time or full time starting with children who turn 4 on or before September 10 of the year of service.

- g. HB 408 - Expand innovative education tax credits and broaden permissible expenditures. This bill expands the innovative education tax credit from \$2 million to \$5 million and now allows expenditure on equipment and facilities supporting innovative educational programming.
- h. HB 549 - Authorizing establishment of public charter schools. We drafted this bill in collaboration with Representative Anderson and the Coalition of Advocates for Montana's Public schools. The bill is constitutionally compliant with schools supervised and controlled by popularly elected trustees and subject to general supervision by the board of public education.
- i. HB 587 - Increase transparency and expand tax relief through 95 mills. This bill devotes the 95 mills to supporting K-12 education funding. The 95 mills now fund the general fund GTB program (262% ratio), and provides \$30 million in permanent local property tax relief for countywide retirement levies. The bill also provides for a contingent spill over to further support GTB support for major maintenance levies and debt service payments due to voter approved bonds.
- j. HB 588 - Expand TEACH Act to ensure the eligibility of class 5 provisional certified staff and to ensure that the "first three years of career" does not count for years when an individual is working under an emergency authorization.
- k. HB 749 - Expand Montana Digital Academy funding for nationwide clearinghouse. The \$950,000 increase in funding will exponentially expand student access to high quality distance learning opportunities, all accessed through enrollment in a resident public school on a part time or full time basis.
- l. HB 833 - Establish teacher residency program. This program funds approximately 70 new teachers each year in rural and isolated communities to help address recruitment and retention.
- m. SB 70 - Ease rules to qualify for Quality Educator Loan Assistance Program to help address recruitment and retention. Removes red tape from the process of qualifying a person for loan repayment by removing the content-specific criteria and qualifying anyone working in a rural or isolated school for loan repayment.
- n. SB 373 - Provide for alternative teacher credentialing to help address recruitment and retention.

- o. SB 444 - Protect unpaid internships related to work-based learning. To ensure student access to work-based learning partnerships and avoid a requirement that a work based learning partner must pay a student intern while that student is gaining credit for the work. Aligns with existing practice for unpaid internships consistent with federal law.

Election of Officers of the Corporation and Amendment to MTSBA Bylaws

President-Elect Nominee (Krystal Zentner, Region 9 Director and Bridger Trustee)
Unanimously nominated by the MTSBA Board.

Vice President Nominee (Rick Cummings Region 5 Director and Cascade Trustee)
Unanimously nominated by the MTSBA Board.

ACKNOWLEDGE OUT-OF-DISTRICT ATTENDANCE AGREEMENTS
(HELENA RESIDENT STUDENTS ATTENDING OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS)

HELENA STUDENTS ATTENDING OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Fiscal Year 2024-25

Grade	Address	District of Attendance
Pre-K	Helena, MT 59601	East Helena K-12
Pre-K	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
Pre-K	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
Pre-K	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
Pre-K	Helena, MT 59601	Clancy Elementary
Pre-K	Helena, MT 59602	Clancy Elementary
Pre-K	Helena, MT 59601	Clancy Elementary
Pre-K	Helena, MT 59602	Clancy Elementary
Pre-K	Helena, MT 59601	Clancy Elementary
K	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
K	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
K	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
K	Helena, MT 59601	East Helena K-12
K	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
K	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
k	Helena, MT 59602	Clancy Elementary
K	East Helena, MT 59635	East Helena K-12
K	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
K	Helena, MT 59601	East Helena K-12
K	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
K	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
1	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
1	Helena, MT 59601	East Helena K-12
1	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
1	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
1	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
1	Helena, MT 59601	East Helena K-12
1	Helena, MT 59602	Townsend K-12
1	Helena, MT 59601	Clancy Elementary
1	Helena, MT 59602	Clancy Elementary
1	Helena, MT 59602	Clancy Elementary
1	Helena, MT 59602	Clancy Elementary
1	Helena, MT 59602	Clancy Elementary
2	Helena, MT 59601	East Helena K-12
2	Helena, MT 59601	East Helena K-12
2	Helena, MT 59601	East Helena K-12
2	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
2	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
2	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
2	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12

ACKNOWLEDGE OUT-OF-DISTRICT ATTENDANCE AGREEMENTS
(HELENA RESIDENT STUDENTS ATTENDING OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS)

HELENA STUDENTS ATTENDING OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Fiscal Year 2024-25

4	Helena, MT 59601	East Helena K-12
4	Helena, MT 59602	Clancy Elementary
4	Helena, MT 59602	Clancy Elementary
4	Helena, MT 59602	Clancy Elementary
4	Helena, MT 59601	Clancy Elementary
5	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
5	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
5	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
5	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
5	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
5	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
5	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
5	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
5	Helena, MT 59601	East Helena K-12
5	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
5	Helena, MT 59601	East Helena K-12
5	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
5	Helena, MT 59601	East Helena K-12
5	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
5	Helena, MT 59602	Clancy Elementary
5	Helena, MT 59602	Clancy Elementary
5	Helena, MT 59601	Clancy Elementary
5	Helena, MT 59601	Clancy Elementary
5	Helena, MT 59601	Clancy Elementary
5	Helena, MT 59602	Clancy Elementary
5	Helena, MT 59601	Clancy Elementary
6	Helena, MT 59601	East Helena K-12
6	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
6	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
6	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
6	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
6	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
6	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
6	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
6	Helena, MT 59601	East Helena K-12
6	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
6	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
6	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
6	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
6	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
6	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
6	Helena, MT 59602	Montana City Elementary
6	Helena, MT 59602	Clancy Elementary

ACKNOWLEDGE OUT-OF-DISTRICT ATTENDANCE AGREEMENTS
(HELENA RESIDENT STUDENTS ATTENDING OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS)

HELENA STUDENTS ATTENDING OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Fiscal Year 2024-25

6	Helena, MT 59602	Clancy Elementary
6	Helena, MT 59602	Clancy Elementary
6	Helena, MT 59602	Clancy Elementary
6	Helena, MT 59602	Clancy Elementary
6	Helena, MT 59601	Clancy Elementary
6	Helena, MT 59601	Clancy Elementary
7	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
7	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
7	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
7	East Helena, MT 59635	East Helena K-12
7	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
7	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
7	Helena, MT 59601	East Helena K-12
7	Helena, MT 59602	Clancy Elementary
7	Helena, MT 59602	Clancy Elementary
7	Helena, MT 59602	Clancy Elementary
7	Helena, MT 59602	Clancy Elementary
8	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
8	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
8	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
8	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
8	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
8	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
8	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
8	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
8	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
8	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
8	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
8	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
8	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
8	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
8	Helena, MT 59601	East Helena K-12
8	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
8	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
8	Helena, MT 59601	Clancy Elementary
8	Helena, MT 59601	Clancy Elementary
8	Helena, MT 59601	Clancy Elementary
8	Helena, MT 59602	Clancy Elementary
9	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
9	Helena, MT 59601	East Helena K-12
9	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
9	Helena, MT 59601	East Helena K-12

ACKNOWLEDGE OUT-OF-DISTRICT ATTENDANCE AGREEMENTS
(HELENA RESIDENT STUDENTS ATTENDING OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS)

HELENA STUDENTS ATTENDING OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Fiscal Year 2024-25

10	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
10	Helena, MT 59601	Jefferson High School
10	Helena, MT 59602	Jefferson High School
10	Helena, MT 59601	Jefferson High School
10	Helena, MT 59602	Jefferson High School
11	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
11	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
11	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
11	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
11	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
11	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
11	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
11	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
11	Helena, MT 59601	East Helena K-12
11	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
11	Helena, MT 59601	East Helena K-12
11	Helena, MT 59601	East Helena K-12
11	Helena, MT 59601	East Helena K-12
11	Helena, MT 59601	East Helena K-12
11	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
11	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
11	Helena, MT 59601	East Helena K-12
11	Helena, MT 59601	East Helena K-12
11	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
11	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
11	Helena, MT 59601	Jefferson High School
11	Helena, MT 59601	Jefferson High School
11	Helena, MT 59601	Jefferson High School
11	Helena, MT 59601	Jefferson High School
12	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
12	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
12	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
12	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
12	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
12	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
12	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
12	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
12	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
12	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
12	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
12	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
12	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
12	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
12	Helena, MT 59601	East Helena K-12

ACKNOWLEDGE OUT-OF-DISTRICT ATTENDANCE AGREEMENTS
(HELENA RESIDENT STUDENTS ATTENDING OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS)

HELENA STUDENTS ATTENDING OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Fiscal Year 2024-25

12	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
12	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
12	Helena, MT 59601	East Helena K-12
12	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
12	Helena, MT 59601	East Helena K-12
12	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
12	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
12	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
12	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
12	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
12	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
12	Helena, MT 59602	East Helena K-12
12	Helena, MT 59601	Jefferson High School
12	Helena, MT 59601	Jefferson High School
12	Helena, MT 59601	Jefferson High School
12	Helena, MT 59602	Jefferson High School

ACKNOWLEDGE OUT-OF-DISTRICT ATTENDANCE AGREEMENTS
(HELENA RESIDENT STUDENTS ATTENDING OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS)

Running Total of Acknowledged Out-of-District Attendance Agreements
(Helena Resident Students Attending Other School Districts)

Grade	East Helena K-12	Montana City Elementary	Clancy Elementary	Jefferson High School	Augusta High School	Total
Pre-K	4	10	5			19
K	11	11	1			23
1	6	8	5			19
2	12	2	5			19
3	15	13	5			33
4	10	1	4			15
5	14	6	7			27
6	13	11	7			31
7	7	2	4			13
8	16	2	4			22
9	21			1		22
10	24			4	1	29
11	19			4		23
12	25			4	2	31
	197	66	47	13	3	326

APPROVAL OF **FY 2024-25** OUT-OF-DISTRICT ATTENDANCE AGREEMENTS
(NONRESIDENT STUDENTS ATTENDING HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT)

Fiscal Year 2024-25

Grade	District of Residence	Address	School of Attendance
K	Wolf Creek Elementary	Helena, MT 59602	Smith Elementary
K	East Helena K-12	Helena, MT 59602	Warren Elementary
1	East Helena K-12	East Helena, MT 59635	Smith Elementary
1	East Helena K-12	East Helena, MT 59635	Smith Elementary
2	Boulder Elementary	Boulder, MT 59632	Kessler Elementary
2	East Helena K-12	East Helena, MT 59635	Smith Elementary
2	East Helena K-12	East Helena, MT 59635	Smith Elementary
3	East Helena K-12	East Helena, MT 59635	Smith Elementary
4	Clancy Elementary	Clancy, MT 59634	Central Elementary
4	East Helena K-12	East Helena, MT 59635	Four Georgians Elementary
4	East Helena K-12	Helena, MT 59601	Smith Elementary
4	East Helena K-12	Helena, MT 59601	Smith Elementary
5	Boulder Elementary	Boulder, MT 59632	Kessler Elementary
5	East Helena K-12	Helena, MT 59602	Bryant Elementary
6	East Helena K-12	Helena, MT 59602	Helena Middle School
6	Trinity Elementary School	Canyon Creek, MT 59633	CR Anderson Middle School
7	East Helena K-12	East Helena, MT 59635	CR Anderson Middle School
9	Jefferson High School	Clancy, MT 59634	Helena High School
9	Jefferson High School	Clancy, MT 59634	Capital High School
9	Jefferson High School	Clancy, MT 59634	Helena High School
11	Jefferson High School	Clancy, MT 59634	Helena High School
11	East Helena K-12	East Helena, MT 59635	Helena High School
12	Billings High School	Billings, MT 59101	Helena High School

**APPROVAL OF FY 2024-25 OUT-OF-DISTRICT ATTENDANCE AGREEMENTS
(NONRESIDENT STUDENTS ATTENDING HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT)**

Running Total of FY 2024-25 Out-of-District Attendance Agreements

Address

Grade	East Helena	Clancy	Montana City	Jefferson City	Basin	Wolf Creek	Canyon Creek	Boulder	Total
K	1					1			2
1	2								2
2	2							1	3
3	1								1
4	3	1							4
5	1							1	2
6	3						1		4
7	1				1				2
8									0
9	3	44	10						57
10	2								2
11	1	2	1						4
12	2	8							10
	22	55	11	0	1	1	1	2	93



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



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 24th, 2024

Lincoln Center

1325 Poplar St., Helena, MT 59601

& via TEAMS

12:00 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
Rachel Robison, Trustee	Kaitlyn Hess, Assessment & Federal Programs
Kay Satre, Trustee	Keri Mizell, Human Resources Director
Jeff Hindoién, Trustee	Candice Delvaux, Executive Assistant
Jennifer Walsh, Trustee	Gary Myers, Director of Educational Technology
Janet Armstrong, Trustee	Barb Ridgway, Chief of Staff
	Josh McKay, Assistant Superintendent
	Sean Maharg, Special Education Director
	Jane Shawn, HEA President
	Lona Carter, Student Health
	Joslyn Davidson, Curriculum Director
	Several HSD Staff
	Several Guests of the Public

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

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn called the meeting to order at 12:02 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 there were no suggested changes to the agenda.

III. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Aaron Pratt gave general public comment. Mr. Pratt is the parent of a Hawthorne student. Mr. Pratt commented on topics including but not limited to his support of neighborhood schools including Hawthorne and his opposition to closing any neighborhood schools, including Hawthorne.

Mr. Kris Goss gave general public comment. Mr. Goss is the parent of a child that will be a student at Hawthorne in the fall. Mr. Goss commented on topics including but not limited to his support of neighborhood schools and his opposition to closing any neighborhood schools, including Hawthorne.

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

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Items For Action

- 1. Organization of the Board of Trustees, Election of Officers, and Appointment of District Clerk**
 - a. Appointment of Board Chair**
 - b. Appointment of Board Vice Chair**
 - c. Appointment of District Clerk**

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn stated that she had asked Trustee Jennifer Walsh to survey the Board of Trustees to see what interest there was for these very important leadership positions.

- 1. Organization of the Board of Trustees, Election of Officers, and Appointment of District Clerk**
 - a. Appointment of Board Chair**

Siobhan Hathhorn, Board Chair, commented. "Do I have a motion to appoint a Board Chair."

Motion: Trustee Kay Satre moved to appoint Trustee Siobhan Hathhorn as Board Chair. Trustee Jennifer Walsh seconded the motion.

Public Comment: None.

Vote: 7-0 motion carries unanimously.

b. Appointment of Board Vice Chair

Siobhan Hathhorn, Board Chair, commented. “Do I have a motion to appoint a Board Vice Chair.”

Motion: Trustee Jeff Hindoiien moved to appoint Trustee Jennifer McKee as Board Vice Chair. Trustee Kay Satre seconded the motion.

Public Comment: None.

Vote: 7-0 motion carries unanimously.

c. Appointment of District Clerk

Siobhan Hathhorn, Board Chair, commented. “Do I have a motion to appoint a District Clerk.”

Motion: Trustee Kay Satre moved to appoint Mrs. Janelle Mickelson as District Clerk. Trustee Jennifer McKee seconded the motion.

Public Comment: None.

Vote: 7-0 motion carries unanimously.

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

B. Item for Information

1. Budget Discussion

The Board of Trustees began by having a robust discussion about school financing, the Montana school funding formula, declining enrollment, the failure of all the levies, and the fact that we need to come up with around \$3,000,000 to balance the budget.

Today, the Board of Trustees will be reviewing and discussing the recommendations from the Budget Consensus Recommendation Committee. The Budget Consensus Recommendation document states: *In the spring of 2023, the Helena School District convened a diverse group of nearly 40 stakeholders with the purpose to examine the district budget and make recommendations for potential reductions. Based on budget forecasting, the district anticipated a budget shortfall for the 2024/25 school year. The committee met approximately 12 times from May 2023 to February 2024. Stakeholders included parents, teachers, administrators, community members, and Board members. The committee used a facilitated consensus process to make decisions. The committee examined several sources of information to create “budget value statements.” The purpose of these statements was to capture goals and objectives that could be used to evaluate potential budget reduction ideas. The statements were presented to the Board of Trustees at their October meeting. At the December committee meeting, the participants brainstormed several budget reduction ideas for each grade level band: K5, MS, HS. Each idea was discussed and clarified. A final list of ideas was forwarded to the administration to determine a cost estimate. Cost estimates were developed based on several assumptions. Using the Budget Value Statements, committee members evaluated each of the budget reduction ideas as they related to each budget value. Each idea was evaluated with regard to impact on (1) student outcomes and achievement (2) programs and environment (3) trust and engagement (4) financial sustainability and (5) staff. For each idea, committee members rated each budget value statement on a scale of significant impact, minor impact, no impact, or positive impact. The average rating of all committee members was used to create a priority list. The items at the top of the list were rated as having minor or no impact on the budget values. While the items at the bottom of the list were rated as having a significant impact on the budget values. It is the recommendation of the committee that the Board would use these prioritized lists when making budget decisions. The Board could consider the low impact items first (top of list) and use the significant impact items (bottom of list) only if needed to balance the budget.*

The Board of Trustees began by reviewing the K5 prioritized list (ranked from least to most impactful.) The first item on the list is *Eliminate the Copy Center* which did not have an estimated cost savings listed. There are a few individuals employed at the Copy Center and we have two or three very large copy machines that are under contract. Eliminating the copy center isn't necessarily going to save a lot because the personnel would go somewhere else in the district, and we have contracts on the machines themselves and some of the payments are paid through a different fund other than the general fund, so we don't see that the copy center at this time is going to provide great savings. The

way it affects the general fund is schools will put in an order to the copy center to make copies for them. So even if we had a third-party vendor instead of our own copy center, the only savings we will see is if that third party vendor charges less than our own copy center. Superintendent Wertz stated that we can put out an RFP to see if we can find a vendor that would be less expensive, but we still must consider the contracts we have on our current copy machines.

The Board of Trustees viewed the next line item which is *Reduce Central Office/Department Budgets By 10%* which has an estimated cost savings of around \$78,000. Superintendent Wertz shared that we reduced central office/department budgets by 20% last year and this would be an additional 10% for this year. Facilities Director Todd Verrill spoke to the difficulty in reducing custodial supplies as it will greatly affect the standards of cleaning that we are accustomed to in the schools. Chief of Staff Barb Ridgway shared this could be significantly difficult for departments such as nurses who rely on supplies for students such as ace bandages, Band-Aids, disposable pillow covers, and Ziplock bags for icepacks. Business Manager Janelle Mickelson stated that her budget covers items such as property liability insurance, elections, and auditing which are items that cannot be reduced, because the cost of all these items continue to rise. Educational Technology Director Gary Myers said his department has already cut out a technology position and since COVID there has not been any money for device replacements. Superintendent Wertz shared that although it is hard and difficult to reduce by another 10%, his district administrators have found the 10% and we are very close to the \$78,000 goal.

Superintendent Wertz shared information regarding the interlocal fund. Currently we have around \$4,000,000 in the interlocal fund, and we have used the interlocal fund to pay for expenses such as technology, curriculum, and property and liability insurance. We have also transferred money from the interlocal fund to cover the deficit of the general fund. Mrs. Mickelson pointed out it is not sustainable to keep doing that year after year as the funds will dry up. If we transfer \$2,000,000 in general fund expenditures to the interlocal fund this year, we will still have a deficit of around \$3,000,000 in the general fund, and the interlocal fund would be reduced to \$2,000,000.

The Board of Trustees moved on to view the next line item *Eliminate Cell Phone Stipends* which has an estimated cost savings of around \$93,000. Superintendent Wertz stated there are some negotiated agreements in the district that include cell phone stipends in their contracts. If we eliminated cell phone stipends, we would have to find a phone contract to have the ability to communicate with groups such as custodians, maintenance, and administrators. We have also implemented the STOP App Notification System that comes through at all hours

of the night on cell phones. Superintendent Wertz stated this is a very important piece around safety and communication, and our district's fifth priority is communication, and it would cost money to bring back some other source of communication such as phone contracts. Trustee Jennifer McKee stated it is worth further discussion because many professions are required to be accessible 24/7 and no one pays for their cell phones, but she recognizes if it is a negotiated benefit in a contract that is different and it a contractual obligation that we have. Trustee Jeff Hindoien pointed out this is not just a \$93,000 estimated savings from the elementary general fund, it is the total of all three matrices (elementary, middle, and high school general funds). Chief of Staff Ridgway pointed out that our nurses use their cell phones to monitor diabetic students and they get a lot of calls from families who don't have regular medical care who are asking the school nurse questions.

The Board of Trustees discussed the next line item, *Restructure PEAK program (K-12)* with an estimated cost savings of \$224,000. Superintendent Wertz stated there have been lots of thoughts and consideration around the PEAK program. By statute we are required to offer a gifted and talented program, so it will never be eliminated but it can be restructured (unless state statute ever says it can be eliminated). Superintendent Wertz discussed three different scenarios, the first option being that all the PEAK teachers come out of the program, and the students participate in the PEAK program within their classrooms in their schools (which would save around \$224,000). The PEAK teachers that are tenured would move back into their certified areas in the classroom. The second scenario is we leave the program the way it is, with no cost savings. The third scenario is there is one district-wide PEAK coordinator, and the students participate in the PEAK program within their buildings. Superintendent Wertz stated we would come back with the amount we would save with the third scenario.

The Board of Trustees moved on to review the next line item, *Eliminate iReady*, which has an estimated cost savings of around \$61,000. Superintendent Wertz stated that we still need a benchmark assessment but there are pieces of the iReady that could be managed differently. Kaitlyn Hess, Assessment and Federal Programs explained there are two pieces to iReady, the first is the assessment component which shows us growth and then it shows teachers what students can do in terms of standards. The other component of iReady is the MyPath instructional computerized program for students, so based on the student's assessment it places them on this pathway and it's a gap skill filler to get them up to grade level and help them with their growth when you benchmark them. When we separate out those two components, we are looking at about \$30,000 for each component. With the technology levy not passing we are looking at having to reduce the number of Chromebooks in K-5, so we will most likely not

be 1-1 anymore, and will be 2-1. We have the MAST assessment next year going on throughout the year and teachers are going to need access to that and access to computers for filing purposes, so we could potentially see the MyPath piece not be feasible if students and teachers do not have access to that. We do have some programs in our district that we believe will still require this including our combo classes in K-5 because teachers rely on it. For example, if they are teaching 3rd grade standards to a group of 3rd graders they need something for those fourth graders to work on to fill skills and gaps. In grades 6-12 we use MyPath just with our Tier 3 students (Special Education, FLS) and we believe they still need that curriculum programming as well. To summarize, we could keep limited licenses in some of the grade levels. So out of the estimated cost savings of \$61,000 that becomes reduced because we need to keep the assessment piece which costs \$30,000 and we need to maintain a portion of the other \$30,000 from MyPath for limited licenses. Ms. Hess stated that she is working on what the estimated savings would be and can bring that information back to the trustees.

The Board of Trustees moved on to discuss the next line item, *Reduce "Independent" Positions* which has an estimated cost savings of \$75,000. Janelle Mickelson, Business Manager, stated that examples of independents include the crafts group, technology staff, administrative assistants at the district office, certain tutors, Human Resources staff, and payroll staff. Independent staff members do not have contracts and are not members of any bargaining unit. Superintendent Weltz asked that his team go through the group of independents and find areas in which we can reduce with the least impact.

The Board of Trustees moved on to discuss the next line item, *Reduce Building Discretionary Budgets by 10%* which has an estimated cost savings of \$28,000. Superintendent Weltz stated last year we reduced building discretionary budgets by 10% and this year we are asking them to reduce by another 10% and it is extremely difficult. Board Chair Hathhorn stated we must be careful about putting pressure on our staff that work with children, and it can be extremely stressful when you don't have the supplies and tools you need to do your job.

The Board of Trustees moved on to discuss the next line item, *Reduce Custodial Services (K-12)* with an estimated cost savings of \$561,000. That amount equals 11 custodians eliminated across all buildings K-12, and we currently have 67 custodians. Todd Verrill, Facilities Director, mentioned that we have had an average of 5 custodial vacancies, so if we consider that, we will need to reduce them by another 6 custodians. Superintendent Weltz stated that 11 may be too much, and 5 may be the right number since we have been down that number most of the year.

The Board of Trustees moved on to discuss the next line item, *Close 1 K-5 School or Close More Than 1*, with an estimated cost savings of \$345,000/Each. The trustees discussed there is much to think about in closing a school such as where will the students go and the expenses that would incur to find a facility to fit all of them, and what that impact would be to the general fund that first year. There are over 200 students that attend Hawthorne Elementary School, and we don't have a school that can fit an additional 200 students. Superintendent Weltz stated in the example of Hawthorne, if it was closed, it would not just sit vacant, we would put out a request for proposal to lease out the building and it would become a revenue source for the district. The trustees discussed there could potentially be an influx of new students coming into the district with the various building projects coming up across Helena, one of them being 600 affordable homes in the next 18 months. Superintendent Weltz stated there will be a need for space for our Early Literacy Program students, but we don't know the number of students yet. The trustees discussed if we did close Hawthorne and had to move those 200 students into a modular there would be a cost to the modular. Mr. Verrill, Facilities Director, stated the cost for a modular would probably be around \$500,000. Superintendent Weltz mentioned that existing modulares can be picked up and relocated. Trustee Jeff Hindoien stated that we did a lot of work on a high-end facilities master plan that has concepts for what we should do in our K-5, middle, and high school facilities. The trustees discussed that closing a school may not be a meaningful fix for next year's problem and it could end up costing us money. Superintendent Weltz mentioned that we have specialized special education programs housed in some of our schools such as Central, and we could bring those students back into their home schools which would open classroom space if we needed to relocate students from a closed school. Superintendent Weltz mentioned financially it could be difficult because those specialized programs are consolidated with two or three highly trained paraprofessionals, and if we disperse those students back into their home schools, we will need those highly trained paraprofessionals in all those schools. Board Chair Hathhorn said it would be good to look at redoing our boundaries and what that looks like from a financial perspective since people have always talked about the need to do that, she would like to know if now is a good time to do that.

The Board of Trustees moved on to review the next line item, *Reduce or Eliminate Field Trips*, which does not have an estimated cost savings listed. Superintendent Weltz stated that does not affect the general fund budget. Janelle Mickelson, Business Manager, stated when the district sold their school busses that money was put into the miscellaneous programs fund, which is

currently being used to fund field trips, and that money is being depleted, but it does not affect the general fund at this time.

The Board of Trustees moved on to review the next line item, *Reduce Nurses or Hire LPN* with an estimated cost savings of \$66,000/Each. Barb Ridgway, Chief of Staff, stated that we spent six months trying to find an LPN and we could not find one. The level of healthcare that we are providing now is so different compared to what was seen ten years ago. Special Education Director Sean Maharg shared there are students coming to us with specialized health needs that are getting more and more severe, and they have really significant needs that you can't delegate, and a nurse needs to oversee. The trustees asked how feasible it would be to maybe reduce one RN and have the existing nurses take on more students, and if the nurses would be spread too thin if they had to do that. Ms. Ridgway mentioned she meets annually with the nurses, and they review where the medical needs are across the district, and then she staffs accordingly and tries to balance that between the nurses. The group discussed there is a significant difference between the level of care that an RN can provide compared to an LPN and it may not be a good idea to replace our RNs with LPNs.

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

V. BOARD COMMENTS

Trustee Armstrong had asked a question about administration at the high school levels, but the trustees determined that is a question related to high school, so they would discuss that when they review the high school recommendations at a future meeting, since they had run out of time at today's meeting and today's discussion was related to elementary.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn adjourned the meeting at 2:08 p.m.

Candice Delvaux, Recording Secretary



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

Thursday, May 30th, 2024

Lincoln Center

1325 Poplar St., Helena, MT 59601

& via TEAMS

4:30 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
Rachel Robison, Trustee	Kaitlyn Hess, Assessment & Federal Programs
Kay Satre, Trustee	Keri Mizell, Human Resources Director
Jeff Hindoién, Trustee	Candice Delvaux, Executive Assistant
Jennifer Walsh, Trustee	Gary Myers, Director of Educational Technology
Janet Armstrong, Trustee	Barb Ridgway, Chief of Staff
Linda Cleatus, Trustee	Joslyn Davidson, Curriculum Director
	Sean Maharg, Special Education Director
	Jane Shawn, HEA President
	Lona Carter, Student Health
	Todd Verrill, Facilities Director
	Tim McMahon, Activities Director
	Karen Ogden, Communications Officer
	Several HSD Staff
	Several Guests of the Public

I. CALL TO ORDER/ PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn called the meeting to order at 4:31 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 suggested changes to the agenda.

III. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Jennifer Skogley gave general public comment. Ms. Skogley is a fifteen-year music educator here in Helena. Ms. Skogley commented on topics including but not limited to the positive cognitive development of music education in the public schools and stated that music educators need to have extensive musical experience and professional training to be able to deliver curriculum effectively and to provide permanent positive cognitive development through music.

Ms. Caitlin Cantrell gave general public comment. Ms. Cantrell is a second year nontenured K-5 music teacher at Jefferson and Smith Elementary Schools. Ms. Cantrell commented on topics including but not limited to the many mental health benefits of music education for students.

Ms. Sarah Dramstad gave general public comment. Ms. Dramstad is in her eighth year of teaching music in the district. Ms. Dramstad commented on topics including but not limited to the number of students music teachers see every day and during their entire time in elementary school, as well as the grants that the music teachers write and receive for the purchase of instruments and materials.

Ms. Tamara Ashley gave general public comment. Ms. Ashley is the parent of a CHS graduate and a soon to be CHS graduate of the district. Ms. Ashley is an elementary music teacher in the district. Ms. Ashley commented on topics including but not limited to describing what active music making looks like in her classroom, and how active music making teaches the whole child mentally, physically, socially, and emotionally. Ms. Ashley also urged the trustees to keep the K-5 music and P.E. programs.

Ms. Jennifer Schaefer gave general public comment. Ms. Schaefer is a kindergarten teacher in the district. Ms. Schaefer commented on topics including but not limited to stating we need to share more about how funding for education works, and specifically how the general fund works. Ms. Schaefer commented that the cuts last year impacted our children that attended the special education preschool and stated the importance of music and P.E. programs in schools.

Ms. Lauren Mitchell gave general public comment. Ms. Mitchell teaches English at Capital High School. Ms. Mitchell commented on topics including but not limited to her opposition

of assigning high school teachers to teach an additional 6th period of students each day or elementary classroom teachers teaching music or P.E. classes and stated this would have a devastating effect on teachers' ability to provide a quality education for all future students in the district.

Mr. Tal Goldin gave general public comment. Mr. Goldin is an Attorney at Law and Director of Advocacy at Disability Rights Montana. Mr. Goldin is a parent of two children in the school district that attend the PEAK program. Mr. Goldin commented on topics including but not limited to asking the Board of Trustees to preserve the PEAK program, as well as stating how the PEAK program assists students with the disability of being twice exceptional.

Mr. Gabriel Furshong gave general public comment. Mr. Furshong is a nontenured second grade teacher at Broadwater Elementary School and was a participant of the Budget Consensus Recommendation Committee. Mr. Furshong commented on topics including but not limited to the alignment between the budget survey the district put out last year and the budget consensus recommendation list. Mr. Furshong commented about the sensibility of cutting PEAK and school consolidation and stated that there are inequalities within the PEAK program.

Ms. Mary Robertson gave general public comment. Ms. Robertson is a second-grade teacher at Jim Darcy Elementary School. Ms. Robertson commented on topics including but not limited to her support of the district's music and P.E. programs and music and P.E. specialists, and her concerns with restructuring those programs.

Ms. Cheri Thornton gave public comment. Ms. Thornton is a mother to two district students that are part of the PEAK program. Ms. Thornton commented on topics including but not limited to her concerns with the music and P.E. programs being eliminated and how that would affect students. Ms. Thornton stated that the PEAK program is not entitled or elitist and expressed her opposition to eliminating or restricting the PEAK program.

Ms. Melissa Ackerman gave general public comment. Ms. Ackerman is a parent of a child in the PEAK program. Ms. Ackerman commented on topics including but not limited to her support of the PEAK program and how it helps students and encouraged the trustees to keep the PEAK program.

Ms. Shana Berry-Brown gave general public comment. Ms. Berry-Brown is a nontenured first grade teacher at Rossiter Elementary. Ms. Berry-Brown commented on topics including but not limited to stating that a program like the PEAK program could really benefit all students in the classroom and that when looking at restructuring the program give every child the opportunity to experience PEAK in their classroom.

Mr. Jody Lehman gave general public comment. Mr. Lehman is a parent of children in the Helena School District, and one of his children is in the district's PEAK program. Mr. Lehman commented on topics including but not limited to requesting that the PEAK program be preserved and stating how much it has benefited his child.

Ms. Becca Leaphart gave general public comment. Ms. Leaphart is a parent of two children in the Helena School District. Ms. Leaphart commented on topics including but not limited to stating there are other ways to structure the current PEAK program that could benefit and enrich all students and expressed her support of keeping music and P.E. in the district.

Ms. Kaitlin Albus gave general public comment. Ms. Albus is a taxpayer in the community, and a mother of three children, and two of them attend the Helena Public Schools. Ms. Albus is a music teacher in the Helena School District. Ms. Albus commented on topics including but not limited to stating the many benefits that music provides and stating the arts are necessary to educate the whole child and that losing these programs would have detrimental effects for years to come.

Mr. Adam Clinch gave general public comment. Mr. Clinch is a nationally board certified math teacher at Capital High School. Mr. Clinch holds two undergraduate degrees: one in physics and one in mathematics as well as two graduate degrees: one in pure mathematics and one in curriculum and instruction. Mr. Clinch commented on topics including but not limited to his opposition of the budget consensus reduction document line item *high school teachers teach six periods* and stated the negative impacts it would have on educators.

Ms. Rebecca Morgan gave general public comment. Ms. Morgan is a parent of a PEAK GT, gifted, twice exceptional student. Ms. Morgan commented on topics including but not limited to explaining what it means to be gifted, and the positive impact the PEAK GT program has made on her child, and the importance of the program.

Mr. Kevin Ward gave general public comment. Mr. Ward commented on topics including but not limited to stating his opposition of raising teacher responsibility to six periods, and stating how detrimental that would be for students and teachers.

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

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Item for Information

1. Budget Discussion

Today, the Board of Trustees will continue to review and discuss the recommendations from the Budget Consensus Recommendation Committee. The Budget Consensus Recommendation Document states: *In the spring of 2023, the Helena School District convened a diverse group of nearly 40 stakeholders with the purpose to examine the district budget and make recommendations for potential reductions. Based on budget forecasting, the district anticipated a budget shortfall for the 2024/25 school year. The committee met approximately 12 times from May 2023 to February 2024. Stakeholders included parents, teachers, administrators, community members, and Board members. The committee used a facilitated consensus process to make decisions. The committee examined several sources of information to create “budget value statements.” The purpose of these statements was to capture goals and objectives that could be used to evaluate potential budget reduction ideas. The statements were presented to the Board of Trustees at their October meeting. At the December committee meeting, the participants brainstormed several budget reduction ideas for each grade level band: K5, MS, HS. Each idea was discussed and clarified. A final list of ideas was forwarded to the administration to determine a cost estimate. Cost estimates were developed based on several assumptions. Using the Budget Value Statements, committee members evaluated each of the budget reduction ideas as they related to each budget value. Each idea was evaluated with regard to impact on (1) student outcomes and achievement (2) programs and environment (3) trust and engagement (4) financial sustainability (5) staff. For each idea, committee members rated each budget value statement on a scale of significant impact, minor impact, no impact, or positive impact. The average rating of all committee members was used to create a priority list. The items at the top of the list were rated as having minor or no impact on the budget values. While the items at the bottom of the list were rated as having a significant impact on the budget values. It is the recommendation of the committee that the Board would use these prioritized lists when making budget decisions. The Board could consider the low impact items first (top of list) and use the significant impact items (bottom of list) only if needed to balance the budget.*

The Board of Trustees reviewed and discussed part of the K5 prioritized list at the Board of Trustees Work Session on Friday, May 24th, and today will be reviewing and discussing the rest of the K5 prioritized list along with the middle

school and high school lists. As of 5.30.24 the projected general fund budget shortfall for K-5 is \$900,000, for 6-8 it is \$300,000, and for 9-12 it is \$1,250,000.

The Board of Trustees began by reviewing the line item: *Larger Class Sizes* with an estimated cost savings of \$759,000 on the K-5 prioritized list. Superintendent Weltz stated that this work was already completed last year when we created combo classes, which created larger class sizes, so there will be no cost savings going into next year since the work was completed last year and would not be a \$759,000 savings. The Board of Trustees stated they would like to know at the next meeting if there are any additional larger class sizes that could be made for next year to create a cost savings, or if we have consolidated as much as we possibly can.

The Board of Trustees reviewed the line item: *Rearrange insurance plan* with an estimated cost savings stating TBD. Board Vice Chair Jennifer McKee explained that the cost savings of rearranging the insurance plan would be zero dollars because it would not affect the general fund directly.

The Board of Trustees reviewed the line item: *Reduce instructional coaches* with an estimated cost savings of zero dollars. Ms. Kaitlyn Hess, Assessment and Federal Programs, discussed what the role of instructional coaches is in the Helena School District. We had pure instructional coaches in the district over the last 6-7 years through the literacy grant and through ESSER funding. After this year we will no longer have the grant or ESSER funding. In our Title 1 schools we formally had Title 1 teachers who worked primarily with students; that model has shifted on a national level and on a state level to what is called a Title Interventionist. They can be looked at as both a coaching position where they are working with teachers and supporting teachers and then they are also working with and supporting students. All those funds will come out of the Title 1 funds, and not the general fund, which would make it a cost savings of zero dollars.

The Board of Trustees reviewed the line item: *Reduce paras (5 paras)* with an estimated cost saving of \$396,000. When this was discussed in the Budget Consensus Committee there was discussion of a reduction of around ten paras at a cost savings of around \$400,000. Superintendent Weltz said that number is quite large and said it should perhaps be around a reduction of five paras, which would bring the cost savings to around \$200,000. Superintendent Weltz stated he would come back to the board with a model of what it would look like to reduce the para positions and the cost savings.

The Board of Trustees reviewed the line item: *Teachers don't get raises, keep people and programs* with an estimated cost savings stating TBD. Superintendent Weltz stated that the committee cannot make that determination as we negotiate with our teacher groups and honor those negotiations, and suggested this line item can be eliminated.

The Board of Trustees reviewed the line item: *Reduce K5 Principals* with an estimated cost savings of \$123,000/each. Superintendent Weltz stated that we have guidelines on how many Principals need to be in a building per certain number of students (we also have the same guidelines for counselors and librarians). Superintendent Weltz stated we are projecting an enrollment in the fall at Hawthorne Elementary of 194 students, and if you look at accreditation standards you can have a halftime principal for under 250 students. Superintendent Weltz explained different scenarios of how a building could run with a halftime Principal, such as having the administrator covering Hawthorne half time and covering the middle school as a half time Assistant Principal. Superintendent Weltz also discussed administration needs for the three charter schools. The Board of Trustees stated they would like more information about these options (for elementary, middle school and high school) and the cost savings associated with them at the next meeting.

The Board of Trustees moved on to review the line item: *Reduce the number of librarians* with an estimated cost savings of \$99,000. Chief of Staff Ridgway stated that Hawthorne Elementary has under 250 students and we reduced the librarian amount already there last year, and Kessler and Jefferson will be close, depending on what enrollment numbers are in the fall. Ms. Ridgway stated we need to remember the important role librarians fill in providing prep time for teachers. The trustees had a robust discussion about accreditation standards and what the consequences are if districts do not meet those standards. Superintendent Weltz stated he would come back with a model of what the reduction of librarian(s) would look like and the cost savings at the next meeting.

The Board of Trustees reviewed the line item: *Restructure elementary P.E. or music* with an estimated cost savings of \$1,000,000. Superintendent Weltz stated there are a total of sixteen music and P.E. teachers in the elementary school so he believes the savings of \$1,000,000 would be a cost savings of a total elimination of all positions, which would put the responsibility of music and P.E. on the classroom teacher. Superintendent Weltz stated that if the board does not want to eliminate all the positions and programs, we could run a model where an elementary student receives two music and two P.E. classes a week for example which would reduce the \$1,000,000 savings but would allow us to keep

the programs. The Board of Trustees stated they would like to see different models and cost savings for these programs at the next meeting.

The Board of Trustees reviewed the line item: *Reduce the number of counselors* with an estimated cost savings of \$119,000. Superintendent Wertz stated he would come back to the board with a model of what the reduction of counselors and cost savings would look like at the next meeting.

The Board of Trustees reviewed the line item: *Reduce curriculum programs* with an estimated cost savings stating TBD. Trustee Jennifer McKee stated that she believes the Budget Consensus Recommendation Committee meant with this line item to purchase curriculum not from the general fund, which we are already doing, so this line item can be disregarded at this time.

The Board of Trustees reviewed the line item: *Reduce or consolidate special ed programs* with an estimated cost savings of \$1,000,000. Superintendent Wertz stated this estimate is if students would go back to their home schools, but the number doesn't consider the amount of paraprofessional support that would have to go into each school to support each of these students. That is why the district came together with unified programs in specific sites to consolidate the best resources into one area, so you didn't have as many resources at every building, so it was a cost saving measure at that time, though it is still an expensive program. Special Education Director Sean Maharg discussed the different special education programs in the district and how many students are in those programs and stated that we would pay at least twice what we are already paying for our special education programs if we sent the students back to their home schools, rather than running the programs we have now. The trustees determined that the estimated costing savings should be zero dollars rather than \$1,000,000 because it would cost us much more money to reduce or consolidate the special ed programs. The Board of Trustees had a robust discussion about special education funding and state funding formulas.

The Board of Trustees moved on to review the middle school budget reduction ideas ranked from least to most impactful from the Budget Consensus Recommendation Committee. They began by reviewing the line item: *Balance boundaries between the two MS* with an estimated cost savings of \$121,000. Superintendent Wertz explained that if you shifted the boundaries in our middle schools, you would take some of the students out of C.R. Anderson Middle School, and you would move them to Helena Middle School, which would require one less principal at C.R. Anderson Middle school, and still not need an additional one at Helena Middle School, thus the elimination of \$121,000. Superintendent Wertz stated the flaw in this is we do not have enough room in

Helena Middle School to shift that many additional students into the school; therefore, the Board of Trustees determined that this line item is not feasible at this time.

The Board of Trustees reviewed the line item: *Eliminate iReady* with an estimated cost savings of \$20,000. At the May 24th Board of Trustees Work Session, Kaitlyn Hess, Assessment and Federal Programs, had explained there are two pieces to iReady, the first is the assessment component which shows us growth and then it shows teachers what students can do in terms of standards. The other component of iReady is the MyPath instructional computerized program for students, so based on the student's assessment it places them on this pathway and it's a gap skill filler to get them up to grade level and help them with their growth when you benchmark them. When we separate out those two components, we are looking at about \$30,000 for each component. With the technology levy not passing we are looking at having to reduce the number of Chromebooks in K-5, so we will most likely not be 1-1 anymore, and will be 2-1. We have the MAST assessment next year going on throughout the year and teachers are going to need access to that and access to computers for filing purposes, so we could potentially see the MyPath piece not be feasible if students and teachers do not have access to that. We do have some programs in our district that we believe will still require this including our combo classes in K-5 because teachers rely on it. For example, if they are teaching 3rd grade standards to a group of 3rd graders they need something for those fourth graders to work on to fill skills and gaps. In grades 6-12 we use MyPath just with our Tier 3 students (Special Education, FLS) and we believe they still need that curriculum programming as well. To summarize, we could keep limited licenses in some of the grade levels. So out of the estimated cost savings of \$61,000 that becomes reduced because we need to keep the assessment piece which costs \$30,000 and we need to maintain a portion of the other \$30,000 from MyPath for limited licenses. Ms. Hess stated that the estimated savings would be around \$20,000. The Board of Trustees had a robust discussion about the MAST assessment.

The Board of Trustees reviewed the line item: *Reduce central office/depart. budgets by 10%* with an estimated cost savings of \$36,000. Last year, the central office department budgets were reduced by 20% and this would be an additional 10% reduction this year. While it is called central office department budgets, it does not mean just pens, paper clips, paper, etc...for the central office, these central office department budgets support the schools. For example, Chief of Staff Ridgway's budget funds things such as K-12 health supplies and nurse's travel costs. The Board of Trustees had a robust conversation about the reductions in administration numbers that have been made in the district and

how the Helena School District administration numbers continue to be lean. Superintendent Wertz discussed some of the various duties of his district administration team with the Board of Trustees and the group discussed the administrative assistants at the district office that provide support to district administration. Superintendent Wertz stated he would provide different scenarios and cost savings to the board regarding the line item *reducing secretaries and independents* in middle school and high school.

The Board of Trustees moved on to review the line item: *Reduce building discretionary budgets by 10%* with an estimated cost savings of \$23,000. Last year the building discretionary budgets were already reduced by 10% and this would be an additional 10% reduction this year. Chair Hathhorn shared that we really need to think about this one, because a lot of teachers don't have the supplies they need because the building discretionary budgets are already low at the buildings. Superintendent Wertz said we can build a model where the trustees can see the savings of \$23,000 built in, but the board may choose to not make a reduction there if we can find the savings somewhere else and it can be reviewed more at the next meeting.

The Board of Trustees reviewed the line item: *Reduce staff. Change the student/staff ratio* with an estimated cost savings of \$330,000. Superintendent Wertz stated that would be a reduction of about five staff members in the middle schools, which he feels is high, and could be more of a three or four staff member reduction which would bring that estimated cost savings number down. Superintendent Wertz stated this reduction could be utilized by retirements and resignations that would not be filled and would predominately come out of electives. Superintendent Wertz stated he would come back with scenarios and numbers for the board to review and discuss.

The Board of Trustees reviewed the line item: *Elementary model for 6th grade* with an estimated cost savings of \$376,000. Superintendent Wertz discussed that this would mean having sixth graders be with one teacher during the day and then seeing specialists (like the elementary model) which would create less staff if they did not move around from class to class all day as they currently do.

The Board of Trustees reviewed the line item: *Reduce elective offerings* with an estimated cost savings of \$931,000. The group discussed that these savings would be achieved through staff reductions and Superintendent Wertz stated he would come back with scenarios and numbers for the board to review and discuss.

The Board of Trustees moved on to review the high school budget reduction ideas ranked from least to most impactful from the Budget Consensus Recommendation Committee. The first line item states *HS GF budget Admin \$ reduction* with an estimated cost savings of \$59,000 for 5%. Superintendent Weltz stated the 5% refers to .5 FTE. The Board of Trustees had a robust discussion about the PAL program and where the building is currently located, and where the program could be located in the future per the facilities master plan. The group also discussed the transportation department's location and how it currently sits on private property and where the building could be located in the future per the facilities master plan.

The Board of Trustees reviewed the line item: *Reduce secretaries and independents* with an estimated cost savings of \$56,000 Sec, and \$45,000 Indep. Superintendent Weltz stated through retirements and resignations some of that is feasible already and he would come back with scenarios and numbers for the board to review.

The Board of Trustees reviewed the line item: *Reduce central office/depart. budgets by 10%* with an estimated cost savings of \$139,000. Last year, the central office department budgets were reduced by 20% and this would be an additional 10% reduction this year.

The Board of Trustees reviewed the line item: *Activity consolidation* with an estimated cost savings of \$10,000. Superintendent Weltz stated the AA Superintendents and AA Athletic Directors are working together collectively to discuss ways to reduce activities and costs such as coach consolidation. Activities Director Tim McMahon explained for activities the general fund only covers officials for games, coach stipends, and it pays for travel.

The Board of Trustees reviewed the line item: *Share teachers across town (1 Share)* with an estimated cost savings of \$66,000. The group discussed that we have done this before with language classes.

The Board of Trustees reviewed the line item: *Reduce building discretionary budgets by 10%* with an estimated cost savings of \$72,000. Last year the building discretionary budgets were already reduced by 10% and this would be an additional 10% reduction this year.

The Board of Trustees reviewed the line item: *Teach 6 out of 7, Keep 23 credits* with an estimated cost savings of 1.5-million-dollars. The group had a robust discussion about what this would look like for teachers, as well as discussing accreditation standards. Superintendent Weltz mentioned he does not believe

this would be as much as a 1.5-million-dollar savings, and he and his team could bring back what the actual savings would be along with different models.

The Board of Trustees reviewed the line item: *Relocate PAL to HHS* with an estimated cost savings of \$300,000. Superintendent Wertz mentioned the \$300,000 savings would come from the reduction of staff at PAL. Earlier in the meeting, the trustees had a robust discussion about the PAL program and where the building is currently located, and where the program could be located in the future per the facilities master plan. The group discussed how successful the PAL program is currently due to their location being separate from the high school, and it would not be the right thing to do right now to merge the program into the high school. The Board of Trustees stated this topic could be brought up again in the future when we are looking at the facilities master plan, and when we know more about what our funding will look like after the next legislative session.

The Board of Trustees reviewed the two-line items that are tied together: *Reduce course offerings, schedule accred. Courses first, then electives* with an estimated cost savings of \$462,000 to \$990,000. Superintendent Wertz stated when he met with Assistant Superintendent Josh McKay and Chief of Staff Barb Ridgway, they discussed these two-line items and the last high school line item *Teach 5 out of 6, reduce to 21 credits* with an estimated cost savings of 1.5 million dollars. They suggested these three-line items could really be off the table as they believe the reduction goal could be achieved without doing these three things. Trustee Jennifer Walsh mentioned it could be worth looking at some scenarios around the reduction of some electives, since we are asking the elementary to look at scenarios for the PEAK, music, and P.E. programs. Superintendent Wertz stated he and his team could come back with different models and cost savings of what that could look like. A few trustees mentioned it would be worth looking at scenarios and what the cost savings would be if elementary teachers could cover some recesses which could reduce the amount of paraprofessionals. Human Resources Director Keri Mizell mentioned that topic was brought up during teacher negotiations and it did not go through for ratification, and if this was something that teachers agreed that they would want to do, an MOU would need to be created.

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

V. BOARD COMMENTS

There were no final board comments.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Board Chair Siobhan Hathorn adjourned the meeting at 9:06 p.m.

Candice Delvaux, Recording Secretary



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, June 4th, 2024
Lincoln Center
1325 Poplar St., Helena, MT 59601
& via TEAMS
12:00 p.m.

MINUTES

ATTENDEES

<i>Trustees</i>	<i>Others</i>
Siobhan Hathhorn, Board Chair	Rex Weltz, Superintendent
Jennifer McKee, Vice Chair	Sean Maharg, Special Education Director
Rachel Robison, Trustee	Kaitlyn Hess, Assessment & Federal Programs
Kay Satre, Trustee	Keri Mizell, Human Resources Director
Jeff Hindoién, Trustee	Candice Delvaux, Executive Assistant
Jennifer Walsh, Trustee	Gary Myers, Director of Educational Technology
Janet Armstrong, Trustee	Barb Ridgway, Chief of Staff
Linda Cleatus, Trustee	Joslyn Davidson, Curriculum Director
	Josh McKay, Assistant Superintendent
	Jane Shawn, HEA President
	Lona Carter, Student Health
	Todd Verrill, Facilities Director
	Tim McMahon, Activities Director
	Karen Ogden, Communications Officer
	Lisa Cordingley, HEF Executive Director
	Several HSD Staff
	Several Guests of the Public

I. CALL TO ORDER/ PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn called the meeting to order at 12:01 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 there were no suggested changes to the agenda.

III. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Jeremy Slead gave general public comment. Mr. Slead has been a teacher in the Helena Public School District for 26 years and has been a teacher for the PEAK Gifted & Talented Program for the last 19 years. Mr. Slead commented on topics including but not limited to the screening process by which they identify students into the PEAK program for gifted services and gave a general program overview.

Ms. Christina Sieminski gave general public comment. Ms. Sieminski is an 18-year educator, and this is her first-year teaching in the PEAK program halftime. Ms. Sieminski commented on topics including but not limited to sharing PEAK program data, describing characteristics of gifted students, and stating that all departments should cut their budgets by 3% to help the general fund deficit.

Ms. Cameron Back gave general public comment. Ms. Back has been a halftime teacher in the PEAK program for two years and has seven years of experience teaching in and around the state in a variety of roles. Ms. Back commented on topics including but not limited to sharing how the PEAK program has produced significant revenues for the district and how the program is actually a cost savings to the district.

Ms. Katy Knight gave general public comment. Ms. Knight has been an educator for 48 years and has spent the last three years as a PEAK Gift and Talented educator. Ms. Knight commented on topics including but not limited to addressing some common myths about gifted education as identified by the National Association for Gifted Children.

Mr. Todd Hoffman gave general public comment. Mr. Hoffman is a parent of a child who just graduated from Capital High School as one of the valedictorians, is one of the few national merit scholars from the district and was a PEAK student. Mr. Hoffman commented on topics including but not limited to his support of the PEAK program and how much it helped his child, and encouraged the board to keep the PEAK, music, and other programs for students.

Ms. Kelsey Grant-Jenkins gave general public comment on behalf of Mr. Michael Fuller. Ms. Grant-Jenkins read a letter from a former PEAK student Michael Fuller. Mr. Fuller graduated from Helena High School in 2016 and is currently a fourth year Doctor of Medicine student at the University of Washington School of Medicine. Mr. Fuller's letter discussed topics including but not limited to expressing his appreciation of the PEAK program and the benefits the program provides and encouraged the trustees to fund and continue the PEAK Gifted and Talented Program.

Ms. Jessica Dorrington gave general public comment on behalf of Ms. Jody Branting who could not be here this evening. Ms. Branting is a third-grade teacher in Helena and a parent of two PEAK students. Ms. Branting's letter discussed topics including but not limited to stating that serving PEAK students during WIN groups at her school would not meet PEAK students' needs and discussed the reasons why.

Mr. Kevin Ward gave general public comment. Mr. Ward commented on topics including but not limited to stating his opposition of placing the burden of balancing the district's budget on the teachers, whether by cutting music and P.E. or by making high school teachers teach an additional period during their day and the negative consequences of teaching an extra period.

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

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Item for Information

1. Budget Discussion

The Board of Trustees viewed a spreadsheet of what the trustees felt were priorities for reductions based upon the discussions from the previous work sessions. The projected general fund budget shortfall for K-5 is \$900,000, for 6-8 it is \$300,000, and for 9-12 it is \$1,250,000. The first item on the spreadsheet states *Reduce central office/department budgets by 10%* with an estimated cost savings of \$92,667 in the high school. The next line-item states *Reduce building discretionary budgets by 10%* with an estimated cost savings of \$48,000 in the high school. The next line-item is Reduce Cell Phone Stipends with an estimated cost savings of \$37,180 in the elementary, \$20,000 in the middle school, and \$30,800 in the high school for a total savings of \$87,980. The group had a robust discussion about cell phone stipends and how some groups have cell phone stipends written into their negotiated agreements, which needs to be

considered. Facilities Director Todd Verrill and Director of Educational Technology Gary Myers recommended that hourly employees be able to keep their stipend, and suggested cell phone stipends only be cut for salaried employees. The next line-item is *Eliminate My Path program from iReady* with an estimated cost savings of \$29,473 in the elementary. The group had a robust discussion about what it would look like to eliminate the My Path program from iReady. The Board of Trustees moved on to review the next line-item which states: *Reduce K5 Principal by .5 and reduce MS principal by .5 and salary savings (combine leadership at 2 schools to 1 Principal & assigning Charter duties)* which would have an estimated cost savings of \$60,000 in the elementary, \$60,000 in the middle school, and \$16,344 in the high school for a total savings of \$136,344. This could be achieved by having a halftime principal at Hawthorne Elementary School and reducing a .5 administrative position at C.R. Anderson as an example. The next line-item states *Salary Savings in Central Office Administrative Changes* with an estimated cost savings of \$15,134 in the elementary, \$7,684 in the middle school, and \$12,348 for a total savings of \$35,166. These savings would be achieved through retirements with a less expensive replacement. The next line-item states *Reduce ES Secretary 1 FTE TBD* with an estimated cost savings of \$50,000 in the elementary. The next line-item states *Reduce MS Secretary by 2 FTE (1 at HMS, and 1 at C.R. Anderson Middle School)* with an estimated cost savings of \$100,000 in the middle school. The group had a robust discussion about the fact that we are reducing staff across the district, but not the workload. We are asking our staff to do more with less people, so it will take us longer to serve our public. The next line-item is *Reduce HS secretaries by 2 FTE (TBD)* with an estimated cost savings of \$100,000 in the high school. The Board of Trustees reviewed the next line-item *Reduce custodial services (restruc. K-12 services by 4 FTE)* with an estimated cost savings of \$97,500 in the elementary, \$32,500 in the middle school, and \$70,000 in the high school for a total savings of \$200,000. The next line-item states *Reduce K-5 independent positions (2 FTE TBD)* with an estimated cost savings of \$75,000 in the elementary. The next line-item states *reduce 9-12 Independent positions (1 FTE TBD)* with an estimated cost savings of \$45,000 in the high school. The Board of Trustees reviewed the next line-item: *Reduce paras (5 paras)* with an estimated cost savings of \$200,000 in the elementary. The group discussed that we have consistently had 5 para vacancies during this year, so we will not fill those five para vacancies next year for the \$200,000 savings. The Board of Trustees reviewed the line-item: *Activity Consolidation* with an estimated cost savings of \$10,000 in the high school which would be achieved by combining head coaching positions in two sports into one. Next, the Board of Trustees viewed the line-item: *Restructure PEAK program (keep 2 teachers district wide)* with an estimated cost savings of \$66,000 in the elementary and \$33,000 in the high school for a total estimated savings of \$99,000. These two teachers would

serve the PEAK program for grades K-12. Superintendent Wertz stated that if the board chooses to go with this option of keeping two PEAK teachers district wide, he and his team would sit down and map out what the restructured PEAK program will look like with the two teachers serving the district PEAK students, and they would also research how other districts are operating their PEAK programs. The group discussed tenured and nontenured teachers, grants that the PEAK program receives, and costs associated with operating the PEAK program. The Board of Trustees moved on to review the next line item: *Reduce the number of ES librarians by 1 FTE*. We reduced one librarian FTE last year and the recommendation of district administration is to not reduce any more librarians this year because not only are they an accredited requirement, but they are also crucial in providing prep time for teachers. Next, the Board of Trustees reviewed the line-item: *Restructure elementary PE & Music (Reduce total 6 FTE, 3 in Music, 3 in PE)* with an estimated costing savings of \$396,000 in the elementary. Right now, there are currently 8 Music FTE and 8 PE FTE for a total of 16 FTE. Superintendent Wertz stated this option would keep the programs from being completely eliminated and described a few scenarios of how often students would go to music and P.E. with this model. The Board of Trustees moved on to review the next line-item: *Reduce teachers by 2 FTE. Change the student/staff ratio*, with an estimated cost savings of \$132,000 in the middle school. Next, the trustees reviewed the line-item: *Reduce 11 FTE by teaching 6 out of 7, Keep 23 credits* with an estimated cost savings of \$726,000 in the high school. Assistant Superintendent Josh McKay stated that a large number of these FTE reductions will be made through resignations or retirements, and a small amount will be from non-renewed staff. Assistant Superintendent McKay discussed state standards of how many students that teachers can teach in a day and discussed scenarios for staff teaching 6 out of 7 periods. The Board of Trustees discussed the recommendation from the Budget Consensus Committee to *Close 1 K-5 School or close more than 1*. The trustees were in agreement that this is not something they would like to do right now as their objective to save money and disrupt students as little as possible would not be served by closing a school at this time. It is something they would like to address in the future because it is extremely difficult to operate small K-5 schools with our current state funding model, and these types of schools are closing around the state. The Trustees also feel it is important to utilize the facilities master plan as a guideline when discussing the closure of schools(s) in the future. The Board of Trustees moved on to review the line-item: *Share teachers across town*. Assistant Superintendent Josh McKay stated there would be no additional savings there because that work was already completed last year. Next, the trustees reviewed the line-item: *Reduce by 1 Counselor* with an estimated cost savings of \$66,000 in the high school. These savings would be achieved through a retirement at Helena High School, and not filling that counseling position, which would still

leave three counselors there and they would be within accreditation standards. The Board of Trustees reviewed the final line-item: *Increase the number of ES counselors (add by .5 FTE)* which has a total cost increase of \$33,000 in the elementary. As an example, if we went to a halftime principal in one of the buildings, we could have a .5 FTE counselor cover the rest of the time the principal is not in the building.

Superintendent Wertz reminded the Board of Trustees that their savings targets were \$900,000 in the elementary, \$300,000 in the middle school, and \$1,250,000 in the high school. In adding up the total savings that were reviewed and proposed today, it would be an estimated savings of \$993,287 in the elementary, \$352,2024 in the middle school, and \$1,250,159 in the high school. At the June 11th, 2024, full Board of Trustees meeting, the trustees will be voting upon budget reduction recommendations for 2024-2025 for the elementary district and high school district.

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

V. BOARD COMMENTS

The trustees had a robust discussion about electives and the line-item: *Reduce 11 HS FTE by teaching 6 out of 7, Keep 23 credits* and Assistant Superintendent McKay and Superintendent Wertz answered any questions the trustees had.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn adjourned the meeting at 3:19 p.m.

Candice Delvaux, Recording Secretary



Superintendent

Rex Wetz
324-2001

Business Manager

Janelle Mickelson
324-2040

Board of Trustees Meeting

Lincoln Center
1325 Poplar St., Helena, MT 59601
And on TEAMS

Tuesday, June 11th, 2024
5:30 p.m.

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE – Present unless otherwise noted.

Siobhan Hathhorn, Chair
Jennifer McKee, Vice Chair
Linda Cleatus, Trustee
Jeff Hindoien, Trustee
Jennifer Walsh, Trustee
Kay Satre, Trustee
Rachel Robison, Trustee
Janet Armstrong, Trustee

Charlie Snellman, Capital High School Student Representative for the Board of Trustees
Adella Harris, Helena High School Student Representative for the Board of Trustees

Rex Wetz, Superintendent
Keri Mizell, Human Resources Director
Josh McKay, Assistant Superintendent
Janelle Mickelson, Business Manager
Barb Ridgway, Chief of Staff
Shane Snyder, Senior Infrastructure & Information Systems Manager
Kaitlyn Hess, Assessment and Federal Programs
Jane Shawn, HEA President
Rob Brewer, Facilities Manager
Rich Franco, Human Resources Benefits Manager
Brett Zanto, Capital High School Principal
Steve Thennis, Helena High School Principal
Many guests of the public as well as Helena School District staff

I. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. REVIEW AGENDA

The Board of Trustees reviewed the agenda and no changes to the agenda were requested.

III. OATH OF OFFICE FOR 2024-2025 BOARD OF TRUSTEES STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

Charlie Snellman was sworn in as the 2024-2025 Capital High School Student Representative, and Adella Harris was sworn in as the 2024-2025 Helena High School Student Representative.

IV. RECOGNITIONS

The Board of Trustees recognized the staff and students listed below.

A. Speech and Debate National Qualifiers-Capital High School

Congratulations to the following students who are National Qualifiers in Speech and Debate: Evelyn Dachs, Fiona Kuntz, and Katherine Armstrong. Special thanks to Coach Ditch for all that she does to encourage and support students.

B. Speech and Debate National Qualifiers-Helena High School

Congratulations to the following students who are National Qualifiers in Speech and Debate: Layla Riggs, Samuel Hutchinson, and Ethan Taylor. Special thanks to Coach Hermanson for all that she does to encourage and support students.

C. Montana Coaches Association Coach of the Year-Capital High Softball

Congratulations to Capital High Girls Softball Coach Mike Miller who has been named the Montana Coaches Association Coach of the Year for softball!!

D. Softball State Champions-Capital High Girls Team

Congratulations to the Capital High Girls Softball team for winning the State Championship!! Special thanks to Coach Mike Miller for all that he does to support these outstanding athletes.

E. Montana Coaches Association Coach of the Year-Helena High School Girls Track & Field

Congratulations to Helena High School Girls Track Coach Jesse Zentz who has been named the Montana Coaches Association Coach of the year for girls track and field!!

F. **Track State Champions-Helena High Girls Team**

Congratulations to the Helena High Girls Track team for winning the Track State Championship!! This is their third state championship in a row!! Special thanks to Coach Jesse Zentz for all that he does to support these outstanding athletes.

G. **Individual State Champions in Track-Helena High Girls**

Congratulations to the following athletes who were individual state champions in track!! Special thanks to Coach Jesse Zentz for all that he does to support these outstanding athletes.

- Madi Todorovich - 300 Hurdles, 400
- Logan Todorovich- 100, 100 Hurdles, High Jump, Long Jump
- Reghan Skogen- Pole Vault
- Logan Todorovich, Hazel Bishop, Reghan Skogen, Madi Todorovich - 4x100 Relay
- Hazel Bishop, Reghan Skogen, Evey Linden, Madi Todorovich - 4x400 Relay

H. **Individual State Champions in Track-Capital High Boys**

Congratulations to the following athletes who were individual state champions in track!! Special thanks to Coach Lon Carter for all that he does to support these outstanding athletes.

- Gavin Mow - 110 Boys Hurdles
- Tyler Crum - Javelin

The Board of Trustees moved on to hear the Superintendent's Report from Superintendent Rex Weltz.

V. **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Superintendent Weltz gave his Superintendent Report to the Board of Trustees.

- **Recognition**
 - Graduations – Seniors/Admin/Staff/Special Guests/Parents/Community
 - PAL – PAL Senior Speeches
 - Access
 - HHS
 - CHS
 - End of the Year Celebrations
 - Staff that make the EOY so special
 - Congratulations to Educator Jen Mooney at Helena Middle School, who was selected as the Helena Education Association Teacher of the Year!!
 - Congratulations to Paraeducator Christi Redmond at Kessler Elementary, who was selected as the Helena Education Association Para Educator of the Year!!

- Congratulations 2024 Helena Public Schools Retirees
- Congratulations to Four Georgians, 2nd Grade Teacher, Mrs. Sheri Johnston, who was selected as the 105.3 KMTX Teacher of the Month for May 2024.
- Thank you, Helena Education Foundation, and the Helena Education Association, for sponsoring the Community School Safety Forum hosted by Jason Russell with Secure Environment Consultants.
- Congratulations to Kathy Kidder, Capital High Assistant Principal, for receiving the Montana Association of Student Councils Administrator of the Year for 2023-2024!
- Congratulations to Sol Jones, C.R. Anderson Middle School Assistant Principal, for receiving the Middle School Student Council Administrator of the Year Award for 2023-2024!
- Thank you to our generous sponsors of the 2024 Retirement Celebration Sodexo and Robert Worthy, Walmart, Costco, Safeway, Albertsons on North Montana, Super 1 Foods, Van's Thriftway, and Forget Me Not Flowers.
- District Office Team

- **New Business**
 - Board of Trustees Work Sessions-Budget Discussions
 - Pre-registration is now open for Helena Public Charter Schools
 - Free screenings are now available now through the end of June for the district's new "KinderSprouts" public preschool program opening this fall
 - Planning for Board Retreat in July
 - Staffing for the 2024-25 SY
 - HSD Hosting the 2024 AA Superintendent Summer Summit

- **Outreach/Meetings**
 - Cabinet & Leadership
 - Retirement Celebrations
 - Hometown Helena Kiwanis
 - Teacher Meeting
 - Parent Advisory Committee
 - Board of Health Meeting
 - Meetings Across District with Jason Russell, SEC
 - Board Leadership
 - AA Superintendents
 - Commercial Energy Meeting
 - HEA/HSD Meeting
 - HEF Board Meeting
 - HEF Executive Committee
 - TV, Print, Radio Media

- Other

That concluded the Superintendent’s Report portion of the agenda. Superintendent Weltz answered any questions the trustees had about his Superintendent Report. The trustees moved on to hear general public comment.

VI. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no general public comment and the Board of Trustees moved on to review the Consent Action Items.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Consent Action Items

1. Personnel Actions
2. Warrants
3. Approval of FY 2023-24 Out-Of-District Attendance Agreements (Nonresident Students Attending Helena School District)
4. Approval of FY 2024-25 Out-Of-District Attendance Agreements (Nonresident Students Attending Helena School District)
5. Acknowledge Out-Of-District Attendance Agreements (Helena Resident Students Attending Other School Districts)
6. 5.14.24 Full Board Meeting Minutes

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn commented, “At this point I would entertain a motion to approve the Consent Action Items as presented.”

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

Public Comment: None.

Vote: 8-0 motion carries unanimously.

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

B. Items for Action

1. Bryant Elementary School Solar Photovoltaic System Project Award Recommendation

Facilities Manager Rob Brewer presented the action item *Bryant Elementary School Solar Photovoltaic System Project Award Recommendation* to the Board of Trustees. Helena Public Schools Facilities Director Todd Verrill is requesting the Board of Trustees award the Bryant

Elementary School Photovoltaic System Project to Solar Montana. The project will install a 62.08kW solar photovoltaic system on the gymnasium roof. The facilities office received bids from three contractors, and Solar Montana submitted the lowest proposal at \$123,739. Solar Montana has completed numerous projects for the district in the past and Mr. Verrill is confident they will provide the same level of professional installation for the Bryant system. They will complete this roof project in the summer of 2024 before the start of the 24-25 school year if approved. Mr. Brewer answered any questions the trustees had regarding this action item. A major portion of the funding for this project is coming from the NorthWestern Energy E+ grant, around \$20,000 will be provided by the Sun Run, and around \$50,000 will come from the building reserve fund.

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn commented, “At this point I would entertain a motion to approve the *Bryant Elementary School Solar Photovoltaic System Project Award Recommendation* as presented.”

Motion: Trustee Kay Satre moved to approve the *Bryant Elementary School Solar Photovoltaic System Project Award Recommendation* as presented. Trustee Jennifer McKee seconded the motion.

Public Comment: None.

Vote: 8-0 motion carries unanimously.

2. Health Benefits Committee Recommendations for Plan Year 24-25

Superintendent Wertz stated there is a wide variety of individuals that serve on the Health Benefits Committee (including teachers, nurses, a trustee, an administrator, and a para educator). Superintendent Wertz and Mr. Franco stated that we are seeing increases in health care across the state and the nation. Mr. Rich Franco, Human Resources Benefits Manager, presented the action item *Health Benefits Committee Recommendations for Plan Year 24-25* to the Board of Trustees. The Health Benefits Committee recommendations to the board is to unbundle the plans, to have an increase in deductibles and max out of pockets to adjust the actuarial value along with making both plans 70/30, to close the percentage gap in premiums between the two health plans, and to adjust the ratios towards national benchmark. Mr. Franco went into detail about each of the recommendations mentioned above and answered any questions the trustees had regarding the recommended changes to the health plan for 24-25 that he presented.

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn commented, “At this point I would entertain a motion to approve the action item *Health Benefits Committee Recommendations for Plan Year 24-25*.”

Motion: Trustee Linda Cleatus moved to approve the action item *Health Benefits Committee Recommendations for Plan Year 24-25*. Trustee Kay Satre seconded the motion.

Public Comment: Ms. Jennifer Schaefer gave public comment on this action item. Ms. Schaefer is a teacher in the district. Ms. Schaefer commented on topics including but not limited to how inflation is causing the insurance prices to go up, however, employees are not receiving anything to help them with inflation and stated how much this increase will hurt the staff in the

district.

Ms. Michelle Schweyen gave public comment on this action item. Ms. Schweyen works in the business office in the district. Ms. Schweyen commented on topics including but not limited to stating that last year due to the insurance changes that were made a large majority of people changed from option one to option two to meet their financial needs in their household and there was a requirement that they need to stay on the plan for two years, and by substantially changing the plan this year seems unfair for the people who don't have the option to switch back to their other plan. Ms. Schweyen also stated there is a substantially higher personal liability on option two versus option one for a single person, so the district is essentially putting that personal liability on the individuals with no compensation on the lower premiums.

Mr. Franco stated explained that employees are no longer mandated to stay on the standard or option two plan for two years. Mr. Franco discussed how difficult these changes are for everyone in the district, but the Health Benefits Committee is trying to make the plan solvent for years to come.

Vote: 8-0 motion carries unanimously.

3. Board of Trustees Budget Reduction Recommendations 2024-2025 (Elementary District)

Superintendent Wertz and the Board of Trustees had a robust discussion about the action item, *Board of Trustees Budget Reduction Recommendations 2024-2025 (Elementary District)*. Superintendent Wertz reviewed the document that showed the Board of Trustees budget reduction recommendations and the total cost savings for the elementary district. Superintendent Wertz stated that our targeted savings for elementary K-5 is \$900,000 and right now we are projecting a savings of \$974,697, however, he does not believe we will be able to reduce the K-5 Independent Positions by 2 FTE (with an estimated cost savings of \$75,000), so our projected savings would be brought back to \$900,000 if we do not reduce the K-5 Independent Positions by 2 FTE. The estimated cost savings for 6-8 is \$342,194. The Board of Trustees, Superintendent Wertz, and Board of Trustees Student Representatives had a robust discussion about the interlocal fund and the legislature meeting for the 2025 session and when school districts may see additional funding.

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn commented. "At this point I would entertain a motion to approve the action item, *Board of Trustees Budget Reduction Recommendations 2024-2025 (Elementary District)* as presented."

Motion: Trustee Jeff Hindoiien moved to approve the reductions in the 24-25 Elementary District budget by the amounts listed and by the line items set forth on the matrix provided in the board agenda for a total amount of \$974,697 across the K-5 budget and \$342,194 across the 6-8 budget. Trustee Janet Armstrong seconded the motion.

Public Comment: Ms. Brenda Nordland gave public comment on this action item. Ms. Nordland served on the Helena Public Schools Board of Trustees for nine years. Ms.

Nordland commented on topics including but not limited to stating that if these cuts are implemented, her granddaughter will receive less education opportunity than either of her children did when they were in school. Ms. Nordland stated her opposition of cuts to the music and P.E. programs and asked the trustees to not take closing schools off the table when considering reductions.

Ms. Jennifer Schaefer gave public comment on this action item. Ms. Schaefer is a teacher in the district. Ms. Schaefer commented on topics including but not limited to stating that restructuring music and P.E. is not a good decision and stated how programs such as music and P.E. impact children and asked the trustees as they vote tonight to keep the people in the district and their direct impact at the front of all their decisions.

Ms. Carrie Owen gave public comment on this action item. Ms. Owen is an HPS parent, a Helena taxpayer, and a public-school teacher at Helena High School. Ms. Owen commented on topics including but not limited to stating that she has become an advocate for the least advantaged students, as well as stating the many benefits of music and physical education. Ms. Owen encouraged the board members to vote against cuts to music and P.E. as it would negatively affect students, especially low-income students in our community.

Ms. Susan Baranek gave public comment on this action item. Ms. Baranek commented on topics including but not limited to stating her support for closing Hawthorne Elementary School if it would allow the rest of our elementary school students to still experience music and P.E.

Ms. Maria Foot gave public comment on this action item. Ms. Foot is a teacher in the district. Ms. Foot commented on topics including but not limited to stating the opportunities that music has provided for her daughter, expressing her concern with the cost of insurance for next year and her opposition of cuts to the music program and how that would negatively affect students.

Ms. Jacque Semmens gave public comment on this action item. Ms. Semmens is a parent of three children in the Helena School District and two of those children have been attending the PEAK program. Ms. Semmens commented on topics including but not limited to stating that her children did everything they could to advocate for the passing of the levies because of how important PEAK has been to them. Ms. Semmens expressed her support for gifted education and stated if the program is reduced that teachers should continue to be able to teach those children directly rather than serving as education coordinators.

Ms. Cassie Buska gave public comment on this action item. Ms. Buska is a taxpayer and a teacher in the school district. Ms. Buska commented on topics including but not limited to speaking in support of the art and P.E. programs and stated the reasons why it is so important for her children.

Mr. Matt Zeltwanger gave public comment on this action item. Mr. Zeltwanger commented on topics including but not limited to speaking in support of the PEAK program and asking

the board to retain the three tenured educators that are crucial to the success of the program.

Ms. Colette Ozburn gave public comment on this action item. Ms. Ozburn is a School Counselor at Warren Elementary School. Ms. Ozburn commented on topics including but not limited to stating her opposition to any cuts or restructuring to the music and P.E. programs. Ms. Ozburn stated her concerns regarding the addition of a .5 counselor potentially covering an elementary school when the administrator is not there.

Ms. Jenny Sika gave public comment on this action item. Ms. Sika was a twenty plus year resident of Montana that moved out of state last year to Wyoming, where she stated they have a full, immersive, gifted and talented program for students. Ms. Sika commented on topics including but not limited to stating her opposition to cuts to the PEAK, music, and P.E. programs.

That concluded public comment on this action item, and Chair Hathhorn asked if there were any further board comments.

Board Vice Chair Jennifer McKee stated that if Hawthorne Elementary School was shut down, there is no room at another school in the district to place over 200 students that currently attend Hawthorne Elementary School. The only way to accommodate these students at another school would require purchasing a modular which would cost around \$500,000. If Hawthorne Elementary School was shut down it would save \$345,000 but if we had to spend \$500,000 on a modular, we would increase our debt by an additional \$150,000 this year, which financially does not make sense at this time. The trustees had a robust discussion about the music and P.E. programs and discussed that we are not entirely eliminating music and P.E., we are reducing it as minimally as possible. Right now, in the elementary district students attend two P.E. classes and two music classes over two weeks for a total of four elementary and music classes, and if we reduce it, they will attend around three elementary and music classes over two weeks. The group also discussed the PEAK program and how there will be discussions and planning around how the program will look if it is restructured. Student Board Representative Adella Harris stated her support of restructuring the PEAK program and stated that students can find other ways to be challenged and rewarded such as through AP and Honors classes. Student Board Representative Charlie Snellman is also in support of restructuring the PEAK program for middle and high school students, however, opposes restructuring the PEAK program for grades three through five. Student Board Representative Charlie Snellman stated how important the music program has been to him and he hopes we will only have to restructure the music program for one or two years in the hopes that there will be more funding in the future to support the program. Trustee Jennifer McKee stated that she hopes in the future we can bring back three administrators at C.R. Anderson because she feels there is truly a need for that. Board Chair Hathhorn stated making these cuts is not something the board wants to do, but they must do it in order to keep our school district solvent. Trustee Jeff Hindoiien expressed his appreciation for the people that served on the Budget Consensus Recommendation Committee and stated that regarding Hawthorne Elementary School you cannot run small K-5 schools under the Montana school funding model with flat or declining enrollment and we need to start planning now for next year.

Vote: 7-0 motion carries unanimously. *(Please note, Trustee Jennifer Walsh abstained from voting due to the fact that she is a Trustee strictly for the high school district, and this action item only pertained to the elementary district.)*

4. Board of Trustees Budget Reduction Recommendations 2024-2025 (High School District)
The Board of Trustees reviewed the action item *Board of Trustees Budget Reduction Recommendations 2024-2025 (High School District)*. Superintendent Weltz reviewed the document that showed the Board of Trustees budget reduction recommendations and the total cost savings for the high school is estimated to be \$1,234,759. Board Chair Hathhorn stated at the end of the last Board of Trustees Work Session the board wanted to further discuss the budget reduction recommendation item, *Reduce 11 FTE by teaching 6 out of 7 (if needed), Keep 23 credits*, therefore, she invited the trustees to discuss this topic further. Trustee Kay Satre stated that she would like to know more regarding how it would be decided which teachers would teach 6 out of 7, and what the process and steps would be. Superintendent Weltz and Assistant Superintendent McKay stated they are beginning to meet with principals to plan this process while keeping accreditation in mind. Trustee Satre stated she is looking for some assurance that there are steps in place to try to mitigate the impact of that *(teaching 6 out of 7)* for as many of our teachers as possible and to make it as equitable as possible, such as having half of the faculty teach a sixth class for the first semester and the other half of the faculty teach a sixth class the second part of the semester. The group had a robust discussion about natural attrition, tenured and non-tenured positions, as well as scheduling, courses offerings and electives. Trustee Jennifer Walsh stated it is very important for our students to be able to have a wide range of choices for course offerings and electives. Trustee Janet Armstrong asked if we are in the same position for the line item: *Reduce 9-12 Independent positions (1 FTE TBD)* with an estimated cost savings of \$45,000 as we are for the elementary line item that states *Reduce K-5 Independent Positions by 2 FTE TBD*. Earlier Superintendent Weltz stated that he does not believe we will be able to reduce the *K-5 Independent Positions by 2 FTE* (with an estimated cost savings of \$75,000), and he also does not believe we will be able to reduce a 9-12 Independent position (1 FTE TBD) in the high school.

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn commented. “At this point I would entertain a motion to approve action item number four: *Board of Trustees Budget Reduction Recommendations for 2024-2025 (High School District)*.”

Motion: Trustee Jennifer Walsh moved to approve *the Board of Trustees Budget Reduction Recommendations for 24-25 (High School District)*. Trustee Jennifer McKee seconded the motion.

Public Comment: Ms. Susan Baranek gave public comment on this action item. Ms. Baranek teaches freshman English at Capital High School. Ms. Baranek commented on topics including but not limited to stating her concerns with increasing class sizes and adding an extra class to many teachers and the effects it will have on students. Ms. Baranek asked the board to reconsider drastically increasing class sizes and adding an extra class to high school teachers.

Ms. Courtney McAdams gave public comment on this action item. Ms. McAdams is the parent of a Capital High School graduate and is the parent of a student at a middle school in the district. Ms. McAdams commented on topics including but not limited to stating her concern with increasing class sizes and her concern with replacing teachers that are retiring this year and that she hopes we look at the quality of those new teachers so that our kids can continue to have the same quality education. Ms. McAdams stated she hopes we will continue to offer remedial options for kids that need to get caught up.

Ms. Cassie Buska gave public comment on this action item. Ms. Buska commented on topics including but not limited to stating her concern with the reduction of 11 FTE in the high school, and if that will affect a Special Education teaching position, and her concern of special education classrooms having too many students in a classroom.

Mr. Adam Clinch gave public comment on this action item. Mr. Clinch is a teacher in the district. Mr. Clinch commented on topics including but not limited to stating the public had the ability to control this result by voting for the levies but since they voted no, teachers are now asked to teach more and do more along with having to pay rising insurance costs. Mr. Clinch stated there seems to be room to maintain five teaching periods with increases in class sizes and implored the vote to board no (*on asking some teachers to teach 6 out of 7 periods*).

That concluded public comment on this action item, and Chair Hathhorn asked if there were any further board comments.

Trustee Janet Armstrong stated the conversation tonight has been extremely respectful and understanding between everyone, and expressed how much she appreciated the new Board of Trustees Student Representatives' energy and ideas they presented this evening.

Trustee Linda Cleatus stated how painful this is and how stretched teachers are and will continue to be and that the board hears them and their concerns, but we have fiscal responsibilities, and this is not the best for everyone, but it is what must be done, and she understands how incredibly painful this is for everyone.

Vote: 8-0 motion carries unanimously.

That concluded the Items for Action and the Board of Trustees moved on to hear Reports.

C. REPORTS

1. Helena Education Association Report
Ms. Jane Shawn, HEA President, gave the Helena Education Association report. Ms. Shawn

welcomed the Board of Trustees Student Representatives, Charlie and Adella. Ms. Shawn congratulated Jen Mooney, who is our Helena Educator of the Year, and Christi Redmond who is our Helena Para Educator of the Year. Mrs. Mooney and Mrs. Redmond's schools were awarded a \$500 donation from the Helena Education Association and the awardee can direct how the school spends the money.

2. Facilities and Technology Committee Report

There was no Facilities and Technology Committee report this evening because the committee did not meet in June.

3. Budget and Finance Committee Report

Trustee Janet Armstrong stated that we covered budget and finance in depth this evening, and there was no further report.

4. Policy Committee Report

There was no Policy Committee report this evening because the committee did not meet in June.

5. Teaching & Learning Committee Report

There was no Teaching & Learning Committee report this evening because the committee did not meet in June.

6. Health Benefits Committee Report

Trustee Kay Satre stated the Health Benefits Committee has had many meetings and that information was covered this evening, and there was no further report.

7. Wellness Committee Report

There was no Wellness Committee report for this evening.

8. Montana School Boards Association Report

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn gave the Montana Schools Boards Association report. Chair Hathhorn stated that MTSBA had their annual meeting, and they also had a meeting to discuss the proposed coalition funding formula recommendation.

That concluded the Reports portion of the agenda. The Board of Trustees moved on to final board comments.

VIII. BOARD COMMENTS

Trustee Kay Satre stated it is important for our community to know there has been a lot of work that has gone on over a good period of time to try to position ourselves to meet this budget, and she appreciates all the hard work that has been done. Trustee Satre stated we are asking a lot of our teachers, our students, our families, and our community and she feels disheartened by the cuts that we have had to make but she also feels that they were the ones that we could make and hopes that one day they can be recouped.

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn thanked the members of the Budget Consensus Recommendation Committee, administration, and teachers for giving feedback and for all the hard work that was done.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn adjourned the meeting at 10:05 p.m.

Candice Delvaux, Recording Secretary

Date

**HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board of Trustees Meeting**

Meeting Date: 07/24/2024

Item IV.B.1

General Public Comment

Consent Action Items

Items For Action

Item Title: Item For Action

1. Approval and Ratification of the HPS-Carpenter Collective Bargaining Agreement for 2024-2026

Board Action	1st Motion	Second	Aye	Nay	Other
Hathhorn					
McKee					
Robison					
Satre					
Hindoien					
Cleatus					
Walsh					
Armstrong					

Board of Trustees

Approval of HPS – Carpenter Collective Bargaining Agreement

IV. NEW BUSINESS

B. Items for Action

1. Approval and Ratification of the HPS-Carpenter Collective Bargaining Agreement for 2024-2026

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 Western States Regional Council of Carpenters reached a tentative agreement on June 26, 2024. The Carpenters (2 members) unanimously ratified the tentative agreement to the contract and notified us on June 27, 2024. The District negotiation team recommends ratification.

The two (2) year agreement was open for language and wages for July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2026. A summary of the conditions of the contract are noted below. Upon the Board's approval, a final copy will be made available electronically.

- The District shall continue to contribute to the employee cafeteria plan an amount of \$1,031.90 per month/\$12,382.80 for the 2024-2025 benefit year.
- The District shall provide one additional floating personal day to be used no later than June 15th annually.
- Sick leave donations are to be approved for a qualifying event as defined under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA). Sick leave donations for a parent, sibling or for purposes of parental leave is limited to a four week maximum.
- A one and a half (1.5%) increase of \$.40 per hour to the base wage from \$26.59 to \$26.99 per hour for the 2024-2025 fiscal year.
- A cell phone allowance of \$50/month will continue to be paid on a quarterly basis on a separate check.
- A current employee with 25+ years of service with the District will receive an additional \$0.25 per hour effective July 1, 2024 to align with the longevity schedule.
- The total estimated salary cost of this settlement is \$2,216.92 for the 2024-2025 fiscal year.

Considerations:

- HPS and the Carpenters have a collaborative relationship and productive negotiations history.
- This agreement continues to bring parity to the bargaining units within HSD that work together on facilities projects.
- This 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 Carpenters.

**HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board of Trustees Meeting**

Meeting Date: 07/24/2024

Item IV.B.2

General Public Comment

Consent Action Items

Items For Action

Item Title: Item For Action

2. Approval and Ratification of the HPS-Craft Council Collective Bargaining Agreement for 2024-2025

Board Action	1st Motion	Second	Aye	Nay	Other
Hathhorn					
McKee					
Robison					
Satre					
Hindoien					
Cleatus					
Walsh					
Armstrong					

Board of Trustees

Approval of HPS – Craft Council Collective Bargaining Agreement



IV. NEW BUSINESS

B. Items for Action

2. Approval and Ratification of the HPS-Craft Council Collective Bargaining Agreement for 2024-2025
-

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 Craft Council (Plumbers and Pipefitters, Local Union #41 and International Association of Machinist and Aerospace Workers Local #88) reached a tentative agreement on July 17, 2024 that was ratified by the members. The District negotiation team recommends ratification.

The one (1) year agreement was open for wages and language for the fiscal year July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025. A summary of the conditions of the contract are noted below. Upon the Board's approval, a final copy will be made available electronically.

- The District shall continue to contribute to the employee cafeteria plan an amount of \$1,031.90 per month/\$12,382.80 for the 2024-2025 benefit year.
- The District shall provide two additional floating personal days to be used no later than June 15th annually. One floating personal day will sunset June 2025.
- A one and a half (1.5%) increase to base wages for the 2024-2025 fiscal year. For the plumbers, this would be an increase of \$.56 per hour to the base wage from \$37.44 to \$38.00 per hour. For the mechanic, this would be an increase of \$0.49 per hour to the base wage from \$32.41 to \$32.90 per hour for the 2024-2025
- A cell phone allowance of \$50/month will continue to be paid on a quarterly basis on a separate check.
- An additional clothing allowance of \$200.00 to be paid in July 2025. This benefit will sunset July 30, 2026.
- The total estimated salary cost of this settlement is \$2,206.50 for the 2024-2025 fiscal year.

Considerations:

- HPS and the Craft Council have a collaborative relationship and productive negotiations history.
- This agreement continues to bring parity to the bargaining units within HSD that work together on facilities projects.
- This 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 Craft Council.

**HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board of Trustees Meeting**

Meeting Date: 07/24/2024

Item IV.B.3

General Public Comment

Consent Action Items

Items For Action

Item Title: Item For Action

3. Approval and Ratification of the HPS-Custodians and Centralized Maintenance Collective Bargaining Agreement for 2024-2025

Board Action	1st Motion	Second	Aye	Nay	Other
Hathhorn					
McKee					
Robison					
Satre					
Hindoien					
Cleatus					
Walsh					
Armstrong					

Board of Trustees

Approval of HPS – AFSCME Collective Bargaining Agreement



IV. NEW BUSINESS

B. Items for Action

3. Approval and Ratification of the HPS-Custodians and Centralized Maintenance Collective Bargaining Agreement for 2024-2025
-

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 American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Montana Council #9 Local #2774, reached a tentative agreement on June 25, 2024. The members ratified the tentative agreement to the contract and notified us on July 18, 2024. The District negotiation team recommends ratification.

The two (2) year agreement was open for wages only for July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025. A summary of the conditions of the contract are noted below. Upon the Board's approval, a final copy will be made available electronically.

- The District shall continue to contribute to the employee cafeteria plan an amount of \$1,031.90 per month/\$12,382.80 for the 2024-2025 benefit year.
- The District shall provide one additional floating personal day to be used no later than June 15th annually.
- A one and a half percent (1.5%) increase of \$0.25 to the base wage from \$16.57 to \$16.82 per hour for the 2024-2025 fiscal year.
- The total estimated salary cost of this settlement is \$37,261 for the 2024-2025 fiscal year.

Considerations:

- HPS and the Custodians and Centralized Maintenance have a collaborative relationship and productive negotiations history.
- This agreement continues to bring parity to the bargaining units within HSD that work together on maintenance and grounds projects.
- This 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 Custodians and Centralized Maintenance.

**HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board of Trustees Meeting**

Meeting Date: 07/24/2024

Item IV.B.4

General Public Comment

Consent Action Items

Items For Action

Item Title: Item For Action

4. Approval and Ratification of the HPS-Electrician Collective Bargaining Agreement for 2024-2026

Board Action	1st Motion	Second	Aye	Nay	Other
Hathhorn					
McKee					
Robison					
Satre					
Hindoien					
Cleatus					
Walsh					
Armstrong					

Board of Trustees

Approval of HPS – Electrician Collective Bargaining Agreement



IV. NEW BUSINESS

B. Items for Action

4. Approval and Ratification of the HPS-Electrician Collective Bargaining Agreement for 2024-2026

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 International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 233 reached a tentative agreement on June 18, 2024. The Electrician (1 member) ratified the tentative agreement to the contract and notified us on July 8, 2024. The District negotiation team recommends ratification.

The two (2) year agreement was open for language and wages for July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2026. A summary of the conditions of the contract are noted below. Upon the Board's approval, a final copy will be made available electronically.

- The District shall continue to contribute to the employee cafeteria plan an amount of \$1,031.90 per month/\$12,382.80 for the 2024-2025 benefit year.
- The District shall provide two additional floating personal days to be used no later than June 15th annually. One floating personal day will sunset June 2025.
- Employees who have at least eighty (80) hours of accrued vacation as of May 25th, may cash out up to forty (40) hours once per year in the June pay period.
- A one and a half (1.5%) increase of \$.53 per hour to the base wage from \$35.12 to \$35.65 per hour for the 2024-2025 fiscal year.
- A cell phone allowance of \$50/month will continue to be paid on a quarterly basis on a separate check.
- The total estimated salary cost of this settlement is \$1,115.62 for the 2024-2025 fiscal year.

Considerations:

- HPS and the Electrical Workers have a collaborative relationship and productive negotiations history.
- This agreement continues to bring parity to the bargaining units within HSD that work together on facilities projects.
- This 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 Electricians.

**HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board of Trustees Meeting**

Meeting Date: 07/24/2024

Item IV.B.5

General Public Comment

Consent Action Items

Items For Action

Item Title: Item For Action

5. Approval of a General Wage Increase to the Independent Salary Matrix for 2024-2025

Board Action	1st Motion	Second	Aye	Nay	Other
Hathhorn					
McKee					
Robison					
Satre					
Hindoien					
Cleatus					
Walsh					
Armstrong					

Board of Trustees

Approval of General Wage Increase for Independents



IV. NEW BUSINESS

B. Items for Action

5. Approval of an increase to the independent salary matrix for 24-25

Background:

Attracting and retaining top talent in the current job market is more challenging than ever. Salary is a significant factor for candidates evaluating job offers and for current employees considering their long-term career prospects. To maintain our position as an employer of choice and attract the best candidates, we must align our compensation packages to reflect industry standards.

Independent positions (classified positions not represented by a bargaining unit) have not seen a salary increase over the last four years.

Investing in competitive salaries is a direct reflection of our commitment to acknowledging and rewarding the valuable contributions of our current employees. A well-compensated workforce is likely to be engaged, motivated, and dedicated to their roles, resulting in increased productivity and higher morale across the organization. Moreover, competitive compensation fosters loyalty and reduces turnover risk, thereby promoting continuity and stability within our workforce.

The total estimated salary cost to the general fund is \$45,000 for the 2024-2025 fiscal year.

Superintendent recommendation:

Approve a 1.5% increase to the salary matrix for independents to remain competitive in the market, enhance recruitment efforts, retain our current talent, and promote equity across all employee groups.

**HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board of Trustees Meeting**

Meeting Date: 07/24/2024

Item IV.C.1

Item For Information

Item Title: **Item For Information**
1. Board of Trustees Summer Retreat Discussion