



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.

Steering Committee HPS Compensation Philosophy Meeting

Thursday, October 10th, 2024

Lincoln Center Board of Trustees Conference Room

12:00 p.m.

MINUTES

ATTENDEES

Janet Armstrong, Trustee	Jim Kerins, CMS
Kay Satre, Trustee	Caleb Lewis, CMS
Jennifer Walsh, Trustee	Barb Ridgway, Chief of Staff
Josh McKay, Assistant Superintendent	Jane Shawn, HEA President
Keri Mizell, Human Resources Director	Adam Clinch, Educator
Candice Delvaux, Executive Assistant	Shane Snyder, Senior Infrastructure & Information Systems Manager
Elizabeth McClure, Educator	Avra Branson, Para Educator
Wynn Randall, Rossiter Elementary Principal	Leighann Wilson, Para Educator
Karen Ogden, Communications Officer	Anne Rainey, HHS Office Manager
Todd Verrill, Facilities Director	Anna Alger, Educator

I. CALL TO ORDER

Trustee Janet Armstrong called the meeting to order at 12:04 p.m.

II. REVIEW OF AGENDA

The agenda was reviewed, and no changes were requested.

III. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no general public comment.

IV. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/DISCUSSION

A. HPS Compensation Philosophy Discussion

The Steering Committee for the HPS Compensation Philosophy began the meeting with introductions. Next, Ms. Keri Mizell, Human Resources Director for Helena Public Schools, highlighted the work that Communication and Management Service LLC (CMS), is completing for the school district. Helena Public Schools (HPS) is contracting with CMS to update the classification and pay plan. The objective of the project is to develop and implement a classification and system that is externally competitive, internally equitable and fiscally responsibly. CMS will collaborate with HPS to provide a contemporary classification and pay system based on the organizations needs and objectives, the regional labor market, professional standards, and best practices. CMS recommends that before developing the classification and pay plan, HPS define its compensation philosophy, which is what the Steering Committee is assisting with today. HPS will use the approved compensation philosophy as a guide in developing classification and pay criteria (e.g., classification system, compensable factors, wage infrastructure) that support this philosophy. The Compensation Philosophy will serve as a guidepost and will articulate the district's management interests but will not limit or otherwise affect employees' ability to collectively bargain.

Mr. Jim Kerins, with Communication and Management Service LLC (CMS), reviewed the typical components of a compensation philosophy followed by examples of compensation philosophies from other organizations. A compensation philosophy statement typically addresses the following issues: competitive position, affordability, internal equity and defensibility, manager and employee understanding, administrative efficiency, performance incentive, and longevity. Mr. Kerins stated that classification and pay systems must conform with the Federal Equal Pay Act of 1963 and Montana Code Annotated 39-3-104 and these legal obligations will be major considerations in defining HPS's classification and pay system.

Next, Mr. Kerins reviewed preliminary compensation philosophy considerations from the July 24th, 2024, Board of Trustees Meeting, preliminary compensation philosophy considerations from the Staff Representatives Work Session on August 15th, 2024, and information collected from the September 10th, 2024 Board of Trustees Full Board Meeting. The Steering Committee had a robust discussion about different topics including incentivizing, certification and skill development, equity concerns, defining equity, and business factors and recruitment. The discussion highlighted the need for a clear philosophy on incentivizing advancement while addressing equity concerns across different employee groups, with a focus on professional development, recognition, and consistent compensation practices. The committee moved on to discuss topics such as compression concerns, value and retention, the impact of inflation, commitment to longevity, performance and merit pay,

alternatives to monetary incentives, and consideration for different groups. The discussion highlighted significant concerns around salary compression, the importance of valuing experience, and the complexities of integrating performance-based pay into the compensation philosophy, while also considering alternative forms of recognition and support for various employee groups.

Next, the committee discussed market position, competitive compensation, wage range considerations, incorporating budget values, stakeholder involvement, a continuous review of the compensation system, compliance considerations, and work-life balance. The discussion emphasized the need for a competitive compensation philosophy that aligns with market standards, incorporates stakeholder input, ensures compliance, and supports employee well-being through work-life balance initiatives. The group agreed on the importance of continual assessment and updates to the compensation system.

To conclude the meeting, the committee had a robust discussion about transparency and communication. The discussion focused on refining the compensation philosophy to emphasize support for employees through a variety of benefits, clear communication regarding pay structures, and ensuring that the language used accurately reflects the district's commitment to these principles. The group agreed on the next steps for finalizing the document which includes meeting again as a committee and preparing the final draft of the HPS Compensation Philosophy for board presentation.

V. BOARD COMMENTS

There were no board comments.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:13 p.m.