



## Board of Trustees Work Session

Tuesday, February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Bryant Elementary School

1520 Livingston Ave., Helena, MT 59601

& Via TEAMS

4:00 p.m. Business & TEAMS Portion  
of the Meeting

Members of the public can attend in person or remotely by clicking the link below:

[Join the meeting now](#)

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## 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. PRESENTATION

Principal Tia Wilkins, Bryant Elementary School

#### V. NEW BUSINESS

##### A. Consent Action Items

1. Personnel Actions
2. 1.28.25 Board Work Session Meeting Minutes
3. Approval of FY 2024-25 Out-Of-District Attendance Agreements (Non-Resident Students Attending HPS)
4. Acknowledge FY 2024-25 Out-Of-District Attendance Agreements (Helena Resident Students Attending Other School Districts)

##### B. Item For Information

1. Helena High School HVAC System Review

#### VI. BOARD COMMENTS

#### VII. ADJOURNMENT

**HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**Board of Trustees Meeting**

**Item I.**

**Meeting Date:** 2/25/2025

☒ Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance

☐ Review of Agenda

☐ General Public Comment

☐ Presentation

☐ Consent Action Items

☐ Item For Information

☐ Board Comments

☐ Adjournment

**Item Title:**      **Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance**

**HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**Board of Trustees Meeting**

**Item II.**

**Meeting Date:** 2/25/2025

☐ Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance

☒ Review of Agenda

☐ General Public Comment

☐ Presentation

☐ Consent Action Items

☐ Item For Information

☐ Board Comments

☐ Adjournment

**Item Title:**      **Review of Agenda**

**HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**Board of Trustees Meeting**

**Item III.**

**Meeting Date:** 2/25/2025

☐ Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance

☐ Review of Agenda

☒ General Public Comment

☐ Presentation

☐ Consent Action Items

☐ Item For Information

☐ Board Comments

☐ Adjournment

**Item Title:**      **General Public Comment**

**HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**Board of Trustees Meeting**

**Item IV.**

**Meeting Date:** 2/25/2025

☐ Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance

☐ Review of Agenda

☐ General Public Comment

☒ Presentation

☐ Consent Action Items

☐ Item For Information

☐ Board Comments

☐ Adjournment

**Item Title:**     **Presentation**  
Principal Tia Wilkins, Bryant Elementary School

# Mission

At Bryant Elementary, we are a dedicated and resilient team committed to fostering an inclusive and supportive learning environment where every individual can thrive. We advocate for our students with care and compassion, creating a nurturing space that empowers growth and transformation.

Guided by grace and intentionality, we embrace each moment as an opportunity to learn, grow, and inspire—both personally and professionally. Together, we strive to build a community rooted in flexibility, resilience, and a shared commitment to excellence.

## ENGAGEMENT



Monthly PAW Winners  
Monthly family engagement opportunities and/or events  
Trimester assemblies  
Weekly communication  
Weekly therapy dogs visits  
Community volunteers  
Coffee with the Principal  
Bryant Alliance  
ELA and Writing SLT Team  
Math and Science SLT Team  
Family and Student Engagement SLT Team  
MTSS- Team

## Bryant Elementary

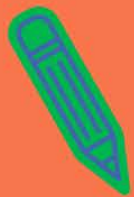
**WE STRIVE TO CREATE A  
COMPASSIONATE,  
INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY  
THAT FOSTERS GROWTH,  
RESILIENCE, AND LIFELONG  
LEARNING FOR ALL.**





# School

## Demographics



Free and Reduced Lunch	69%
Kid Packs	217
Students with IEP's	51
Students receiving speech	59
Students on 504 Plans	7
Indian Education Tutoring	48
McKinney Vento	35
CSCT Services	22



# School

## Demographics (FTE)



KinderSprouts (1)

18

Kindergarten (2)

40

First (2)

33

Second (2)

36

Third (2)

47

Fourth (2)

40

Fifth (2)

42

TLC (2)

13

PBS (1)

6

Total Enrollment

277

# Action Plan

## Goals



**MATH GOAL:** By May 2025, we will decrease our Tier 3 students from 47% to 17%.

**ELA GOAL:** By May 2025, we will decrease our Tier 3 students by 10% (from 31% to 21%).

**FAMILY & STUDENT ENGAGEMENT GOAL:** School-wide focus on varied family and student engagement through communication (in-person and virtual) and diverse school events. Maintain 90% or higher participation in parent teacher conferences.



**HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**Board of Trustees Meeting**

**Meeting Date:** 2/25/2025

**Item V.A1.-A.4.**

☐ Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance

☐ Review of Agenda

☐ General Public Comment

☐ Presentation

☒ Consent Action Items

☐ Item For Information

☐ Board Comments

☐ Adjournment

**Item Title:      Consent Action Items**

1. Personnel Actions
2. 1.28.25 Board Work Session Meeting Minutes
3. Approval of FY 2024-25 Out-Of-District Attendance Agreements (Non-Resident Students Attending HPS)
4. Acknowledge FY 2024-25 Out-Of-District Attendance Agreements (Helena Resident Students Attending Other School Districts)

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

## **PERSONNEL ACTIONS**

February 12, 2025 – February 25, 2025

### **CERTIFIED PERSONNEL**

#### **Appointments**

<b><u>Location/Assignment</u></b>	<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Offered Salary</u></b>	<b><u>Accepted Salary</u></b>	<b><u>Start Date</u></b>
Hawthorne/School Psychologist	Weisburg, Alexandria	\$362.24/day	\$362.24/day	02/24/2025 ***
CHS/Health-Physical Education	Frankino, Jenna	\$240.73/day	\$240.73/day	02/19/2025 ***
Four Georgians/Kindergarten	Gomes, Debbie	\$229.27/day	\$229.27/day	02/26/2025 ***

\*\*Prorated salary

\*\*\*Long term substitute

#### **Terminations/Retirements**

<b><u>Location/Assignment</u></b>	<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Reason</u></b>	<b><u>Effective</u></b>
Four Georgians/Kindergarten	Lawson, AmberLynn	Resignation	02/28/2025
Central/LOAWOP	Shields, Martel	Resignation	06/10/2025
HMS/LOAWOP	Berry, Kristin	Resignation	06/10/2025

#### **Leaves**

<b><u>Location/Assignment</u></b>	<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Term</u></b>	<b><u>Type of Leave</u></b>
CHS/Health-Physical Education	Barton, Heather	02/24/2025 to 06/11/2025	LOAWOP
CRA/LOAWOP	O'Leary, Katherine	2025-2026	LOAWOP

### **CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL**

#### **Appointments**

<u>Location/Assignment</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Offered Salary</u>	<u>Accepted Salary</u>	<u>Start Date</u>
CRA/Evening Custodian	Connolly, Paul	\$16.90/hr.	\$16.90/hr.	02/10/2025
Central/Para Educator	Deernose, Raeanna	\$17.75/hr.	\$17.75/hr.	01/27/2025
HHS/Float Custodian	Mayberry, Jakob	\$16.90/hr.	\$16.90/hr.	02/18/2025

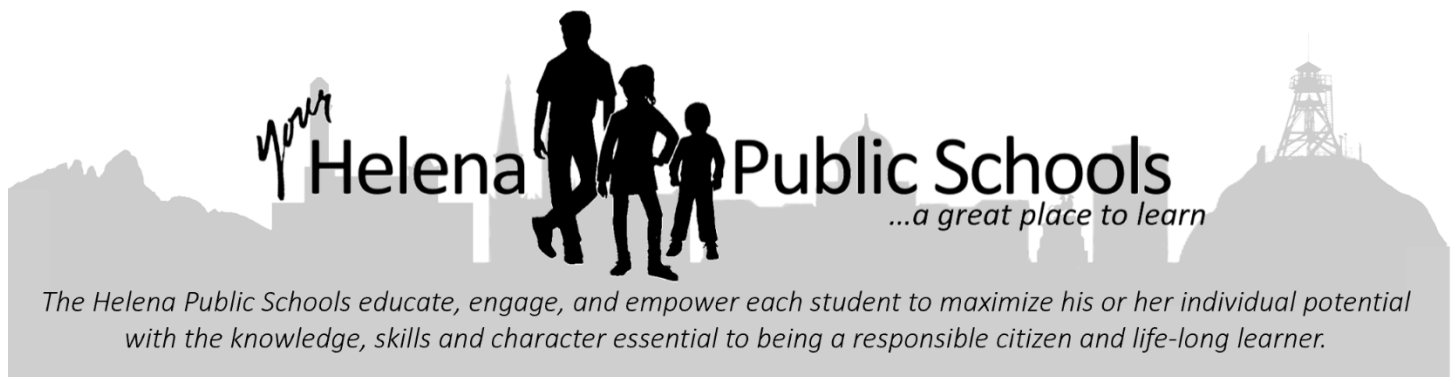
### Terminations/Retirements

<u>Location/Assignment</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Reason</u>	<u>Effective</u>
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### SUPPLEMENTARY CONTRACT ASSIGNMENT

Richard	McMahon	Track-Coordinator	Helena/Capital	\$ 1,824.00	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Casey	Peck	Softball-JV Asst	Capital High	\$ 2,348.04	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Morgan	Harris	Softball Coordinator	Capital High	\$ 300.00	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Jade	Metzler	Softball-Coordinator	Capital High	\$ 300.00	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Ashten	Broadhead	Softball-Head Coach	Capital High	\$ 4,643.40	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Shelby	VanHemelryck	Softball-Head JV Coach	Capital High	\$ 2,576.08	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Jade	Metzler	Softball Varsity Asst.	Capital High	\$ 1,623.50	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Morgan	Harris	Softball-Varsity Asst	Capital High	\$ 1,623.50	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Ryan	Swenson	Tennis - Head Coach	Capital High	\$ 4,252.70	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Jordan	Tyler	Tennis-JV Coach	Capital High	\$ 1,980.00	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Marty	Binde	Tennis-Varsity Asst.	Capital High	\$ 2,973.60	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Lonzo	Carter	Track-Head Boys Coach	Capital High	\$ 7,330.44	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Mikayla	Nickol (Bloyder)	Track - Asst Boys Coach	Capital High	\$ 1,765.50	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Edward	Darfler	Track - Asst Boys Coach	Capital High	\$ 4,815.00	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Lee	Carter	Track - Asst Boys Coach	Capital High	\$ 1,669.20	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Matthew	McGinley	Track - Asst Boys Coach	Capital High	\$ 1,605.00	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Alex	Wrigg	Track - Asst Boys Coach	Capital High	\$ 1,637.10	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Ricknold	Thompson	Track - Asst Boys Coach	Capital High	\$ 4,301.40	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Tamara	Kolar	Track - Asst Boys Coach	Capital High	\$ 1,861.80	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Mason	Yochum	Track - Asst Boys Coach	Capital High	\$ 1,605.00	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Mikayla	Nickol (Bloyder)	Track-Asst Girls Coach	Capital High	\$ 1,765.50	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Sarah	Perry	Track-Asst Girls Coach	Capital High	\$ 3,210.00	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Alexa	Wrigg	Track-Asst Girls Coach	Capital High	\$ 1,637.10	3/10/2025	5/24/2025

Hollee	Goody	Track-Asst Girls Coach	Capital High	\$ 3,659.40	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Timothy	Kelly	Track-Asst Girls Coach	Capital High	\$ 3,884.10	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Emma	Perry	Track-Asst Girls Coach	Capital High	\$ 1,605.00	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Bryana	Curry	Tack -Asst Girls Coach	Capital High	\$ 1,605.00	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Jared	Hunt	Track-Head Girls Coach	Capital High	\$ 5,121.91	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Jennifer	Klemp	Softball Coordinator	Helena High	\$ 330.00	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Brittany	Hogan	Softball Coordinator	Helena High	\$ 336.00	3/10/2025	5/21/2025
Ryan	Schulte	Softball - Field Maintenance	Helena High	\$ 1,515.00	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Ryan	Schulte	Softball-Head Coach	Helena High	\$ 4,728.60	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Jennifer	Klemp	Softball-JV Asst	Helena High	\$ 2,417.10	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Brittany	Hogan	Softball-JV Head	Helena High	\$ 2,625.62	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Justi	Owens (Crofutt)	Softball-Varsity Asst	Helena High	\$ 3,474.29	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Nicole	Riebe	Tennis - Head Coach	Helena High	\$ 4,215.72	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Connor	Casne-Jones	Tennis - JV Coach	Helena High	\$ 1,836.00	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Samuel	Garetson	Tennis - Varsity Asst.	Helena High	\$ 2,916.96	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Coby	Furlong	Track - Asst Boys Coach	Helena High	\$ 3,402.60	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Allie	Keleti	Track - Asst Boys Coach	Helena High	\$ 3,306.30	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Michael	Madsen	Track - Asst Boys Coach	Helena High	\$ 3,402.60	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Andrew (Andy)	Mulvaney	Track - Asst Boys Coach	Helena High	\$ 3,274.20	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
William	Hurford	Track - Asst Boys Coach	Helena High	\$ 3,595.20	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Kelley	Gilbert	Track - Asst Girls Coach	Helena High	\$ 4,429.80	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Jenna	Frankino	Track - Asst Girls Coach	Helena High	\$ 3,274.20	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Joanna	Schwartz	Track - Asst Girls Coach	Helena High	\$ 1,701.30	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Heather	McNeil	Track - Asst Girls Coach	Helena High	\$ 3,980.40	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Andrew	Mozier	Track - Asst Girls Coach	Helena High	\$ 3,627.30	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Nikki	Krueger	Track - Asst Girls Coach	Helena High	\$ 1,669.20	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Manuel	Garza	Track - Head Boys Coach	Helena High	\$ 5,544.82	3/10/2025	5/24/2025
Jesse	Zentz	Track - Head Girls Coach	Helena High	\$ 5,074.92	3/10/2025	5/24/2025



## Board of Trustees Work Session

Tuesday, January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025

3:30 p.m. Tour of Four Georgians Elementary School 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
Janet Armstrong, Trustee	Gary Myers, Director of Educational Technology
	Justine Alberts, Curriculum Director
	Lona Carter, Student Health Services & Special Education Director
	Kaitlyn Hess, Assessment & Federal Programs Director
	Carrie Shinkle, Four Georgians Principal
	Barb Ridgway, Chief of Staff
	Todd Verill, Facilities Director
	Jane Shawn, HEA President
	Karen Ogden, Communications Officer
	Tim Meldrum, SMA Architecture + Design
	Ali Martin, SMA Architecture + Design
	Several Four Georgians Elementary Staff Members
	Hanna Warhank, Guest of the Public

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

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn called the meeting to order at 4:00 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.

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 Carrie Shinkle, Principal of Four Georgians Elementary School.

**IV. PRESENTATION**

Principal Carrie Shinkle, with the assistance of several staff members at Four Georgians (4Gs), provided a comprehensive overview of the school, beginning with the various family engagement opportunities at 4Gs, which include:

- Open House and PTO Social
- Helena Education Foundation Carnival
- Fabulous Firsts
- Walk to School Day
- Book Fair
- PTO Bootastic Bingo
- Cookies, Cocoa, and Caroling
- PTO Movie Night
- Science Night
- Week of the Young Child-Storytime with the Principal
- Art Night
- PTO Spring Fling and Fun Run
- Four Georgians Field Day
- Kindergarten Promotion
- End of Year Awards Assembly
- Kindergarten Jumpstart



Next, Principal Shinkle reviewed assessment results with the Board of Trustees. The information provided is the percentage of students scoring proficient.

- Acadience 2024
  - K-83%
  - 1<sup>st</sup>-67%
  
- i-Ready Reading

	2024	2024-District
2 <sup>nd</sup>	83%	72%
3 <sup>rd</sup>	82%	72%
4 <sup>th</sup>	58%	63%
5 <sup>th</sup>	60%	59%

  
- i-Ready Math

1 <sup>st</sup>	77%	62%
2 <sup>nd</sup>	72%	63%
3 <sup>rd</sup>	64%	57%
4 <sup>th</sup>	60%	66%
5 <sup>th</sup>	55%	56%

Principal Shinkle moved on to share the action plan goals at Four Georgians Elementary School.

Goal 1: By spring of 2025, 80% of Four Georgians' kindergarteners and first graders will be proficient in foundational reading skills as evidenced by district Acadience scores.

Goal 2: By spring of 2025, an average of 80% of Four Georgians' second through fifth graders will score on or above grade level, demonstrating proficiency of grade-level standards, as evidenced by the iReady Reading Assessment.

Goal 3: By spring of 2025, an average of 70% of Four Georgians' first through fifth graders will score on or above grade level, demonstrating proficiency of grade-level standards, as evidenced by the iReady Math Assessment.

During the presentation, the Board of Trustees had the opportunity to review a flyer regarding Four Georgians Elementary School, which provided the following demographic information:

Kindergarten: 80 students  
Grade 1: 70 students  
Grade 2: 77 students  
Grade 3: 83 students

Free & Reduced: 28%  
PEAK: 25 Students  
IEFA: 28 Students  
McKinney-Vento: 23 Students

Grade 4: 83 students  
Grade 5: 76 students  
Total: 469 students

Principal Shinkle concluded her presentation by addressing questions from the Board of Trustees regarding her presentation.

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

## **V. NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. Consent Action Items**

1. Personnel Actions
2. 11.26.24 Board Work Session Meeting Minutes
3. Approval of FY 2024-25 Out-Of-District Attendance Agreements (Non-Resident Students Attending HPS)
4. Acknowledge FY 2024-25 Out-Of-District Attendance Agreements (Helena Resident Students Attending Other School Districts)

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

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

**Public Comment:** None.

**Vote:** 6-0 motion carries unanimously.

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

### **B. Items For Information**

#### **1. Innovative Tax Credit Donations**

Mrs. Janelle Mickelson, Business Manager for Helena Public Schools, presented for information regarding the Innovative Tax Credit Donations. The Innovate Tax Credit Donations program saw an impressive response, with 50 donors contributing to the cause. As the program operates on a first-come, first-serve basis, many donors chose to split their contributions between the elementary and high school districts, which resulted in more than 50 data entries being

processed. Despite the high volume, all donations were successfully entered and approved.

The total amount raised was \$305,100, with \$167,250 directed to the elementary district and \$137,850 allocated to the high School district. However, \$84,750 worth of requests remained unvalidated. To address this, the Department of Revenue (DOR) will reopen the portal on October 1, 2025, to allow districts to claim the remaining balance. Ms. Mickelson addressed questions from the Board of Trustees regarding the Innovative Tax Credit Donations program.

## 2. **Levies Discussion**

Superintendent Weltz and Mr. Gary Myers, Director of Educational Technology, presented information about the Helena Schools tech levy. The district is facing an urgent need for technology funding, totaling \$4 million, to adequately support the integration and maintenance of technology across our schools. This funding is essential for providing devices for teachers, students, and classrooms, ensuring reliable network services, covering necessary software licensing, and supplying the ongoing support required to prepare students for college and future careers. In response, the district is proposing a \$3 million increase to the existing technology levy.

It is important to note that our current technology levy has remained unchanged since 2004. Over the past two decades, the role of technology in both education and the workplace has grown exponentially, becoming a fundamental tool that is now ubiquitous in nearly every aspect of life. Presently, the district allocates approximately \$2 million annually toward technology, with an additional \$1 million or more drawn each year from our interlocal fund. However, these funds are one-time dollars, which cannot be replenished once spent.

The existing levy, currently set at \$1 million, merely "keeps the lights on" by supporting essential functions. Unfortunately, it falls short in allowing for the replacement of outdated devices for both students and teachers or for updating critical network infrastructure. As it stands, if a device or system fails, we lack the resources to address the issue.

The proposed levy increase is specifically earmarked for essential technology funding and is designed to cover the next 10 years, ensuring the district can meet current and future technology demands. This levy will not be perpetual,

providing a targeted and time-limited solution to the district's technology funding needs.

Superintendent Weltz and Mr. Myers concluded their presentation by addressing questions from the Board of Trustees regarding the tech levy.

3. **SMA Architecture + Design-Pre-Bond Work Process**

Mr. Tim Meldrum and Ms. Ali Martin from SMA Architecture + Design presented to the Board of Trustees an overview of the proposed pre-bond planning schedule. This schedule includes two distinct phases: Bond Scope Definition - Phase IV, which spans from January 2025 through May 2025, followed by Bond Campaign - Phase V, running from May 2025 through November 2025. Key events within the pre-bond planning period include a series of building tours and staff meetings at various locations, including Capital High School, Helena High School, Kessler, and PAL. In addition to these tours, several important meetings are scheduled, such as multiple bond committee sessions, stakeholder meetings at Capital High School, Helena High School, and Kessler, and a series of community-focused engagements. The schedule also outlines interactions with the Grassroots Bond Campaign and district meetings with various community groups to ensure broad engagement and input. Mr. Meldrum and Ms. Martin addressed a series of questions from the Board of Trustees regarding the draft pre-bond planning schedule, providing further clarification and insight as needed.

Following the presentation, the Board of Trustees engaged in a robust and thorough discussion about the roadmap for the bond, with topics including but not limited to its proposed timing, the district's facility needs, the technology levy and its potential impact, and the overall planning process.

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

VI. **BOARD COMMENTS**

Superintendent Rex Weltz informed the Board that on Monday, February 10th, a Facilities and Technology tour will be conducted, visiting key district facilities, including Helena High School, Capital High School, and Kessler Elementary. The purpose of the tour is to evaluate the logistical operations and assess the current conditions of these facilities.

Furthermore, during the full Board meeting scheduled for March 11th, Ms. Bridget Ekstrom from D.A. Davidson & Co. will provide an in-depth presentation on the bond process. She will discuss the operational framework of bonds, the underlying rationale for issuing them, and the procedures involved in their sale. This session aims to enhance the Board's understanding of the bond process and its implications for the district's future initiatives.

The Board of Trustees had a robust conversation focused on the academic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on students, particularly those in the elementary and middle school grades. There was concern about the potential academic gaps for students who missed critical learning periods, particularly in foundational areas like reading and math. Plans have been outlined to address these gaps, with a focus on differentiated instruction, interventions, and curriculum adjustments to ensure recovery. It was noted that younger students, especially in elementary grades, had the best chance for academic recovery due to the developmental nature of early learning. The importance of continued focus on both academic and mental health support for these students was emphasized.

There were no further board comments.

## **VII. ADJOURNMENT**

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn adjourned the meeting at 5:49 p.m.

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Candice Delvaux, Recording Secretary

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

Fiscal Year 2024-25

Discretionary Attendance:

Grade	District of Residence	Address	School of Attendance
K	East Helena K-12	East Helena, MT 59635	Jefferson Elementary
1	East Helena K-12	Helena, MT 59602	Warren Elementary
3	East Helena K-12	East Helena, MT 59635	Jefferson Elementary
3	Ronan Elementary	Ronan, MT 59684	Jefferson Elementary

Mandatory Attendance:

Grade	District of Residence	Address	School of Attendance
6	Superior K-12	Superior, MT 59872	CR Anderson Middle 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	Boulder	Elliston	Trinity	Chinook	Butte	Billings	Deer Lodge	Missoula	Townsend	Radersberg	Browning	Winston	Ronan	Superior	Whitehall	Total	
Ksprouts	3								1													4	
K	5	1				1			5												1	13	
1	9	4							5													18	
2	6	1				1	1	1	4												1	15	
3	3	1							6	1									1			12	
4	6	2							4													12	
5	6		1				1		9		1	1										19	
6	5	1						1	3		1									1		12	
7	3	2			1				5													11	
8	3	5	1			1		1	3				1									15	
9	7	50	10											1								68	
10	9	27	2												1	1	1					41	
11	12	19	4	3																		38	
12	12	27	3	2											1	1		1				47	
	89	140	21	5	1	3	2	3	45	1	2		1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	325	

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

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Fiscal Year 2024-25

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Mandatory Attendance:

Grade	Address	District/Center of Attendance
10	Helena, MT59601	Kalispell 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	Trinity Elementary	Cascade High School	Huntley Project K-12	Fairfield High School	Augusta High School	Kalispell High School	Aware CFE	New Day	Total
Pre-K	4	10	6										20
K	11	13	1				1						26
1	6	8	5		1								20
2	12	2	5										19
3	15	13	5										33
4	10	1	4		2								17
5	15	8	9		2							1	35
6	13	11	7										31
7	7	4	5										16
8	16	2	4									1	23
9	21			1									22
10	24			4		2		1	1	1	1	1	35
11	19			4		4							27
12	25			4		2			2	1			34
	198	72	51	13	5	8	1	1	3	2	1	3	358

**HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**Board of Trustees Meeting**

**Meeting Date:** 2/25/2025

**Item V.B.1**

☐ Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance

☐ Review of Agenda

☐ General Public Comment

☐ Presentation

☐ Consent Action Items

☒ Item For Information

☐ Board Comments

☐ Adjournment

**Item Title:**      **Item For Information**  
1. Helena High School HVAC System Review



February 10, 2025

Helena Public Schools  
Attention: Todd Verrill

Email: [tverrill@helenaschools.org](mailto:tverrill@helenaschools.org)

RE: Helena High School  
HVAC Rehabilitation

Dear Todd,

Thank you for the opportunity to assist you in the review of the Helena High School mechanical systems. The original building was opened in 1955. The heating system is a low-pressure steam system and beginning to show its age. Per our conversation I understand that the District is starting to plan for the next chapter for Helena High. In the next 18 months the District's intent to approach the taxpayers for a bond to either remodel Helena High or replace it. However, if the voters approve funding in the fall of 2025, it would be the 2028/2029 school year before either option could be completed. Your intent, based on recent events, is to review the system to determine how to extend the existing services to achieve this timeline.

Current Issues:

1. The boilers in the building are original to the building. While maintenance has been continuing over the years the units are now 70 years old. The standard service life for this style of equipment is 50-years max.
2. Condensate Return Pumps: To move condensate (steam water) back to the boiler room due to the building size, in the tunnel areas of the building are located seven condensate pumps. These units were installed when the building was constructed. All units show indications of multiple motor changes, steam leaks, wiring repairs, etc.
3. Condensate Return Main: This piping returns the water from the condensed steam back to the boiler for reuse. Most of this piping is original to the building. The piping has a service life of 50-60 years depending on the chemical treatment of the steam heating system. Presently the steam heating system requires a continuous stream of make-up water whenever the heating system is operational. This continual stream of make-up water introduces additional corrosion, metal eating oxygen and waste energy.
4. The building ventilation equipment is original per the section of the building upon which it is installed. This equipment has a service life of less than 40 years. Unfortunately, most of the equipment is older than 60 years old. Several of the units in the gymnasium are worn out and just turned off. Unfortunately, the Auditorium is only served by a single unit. The rear

fan blower mount of this unit has fallen off. The unit is not operational without major rework. Without this unit there is NO air ventilation being introduced to the auditorium.

After walking through the facility with your staff those are the immediate needs. There are additional needs that will need to be addressed as a portion of any building remodel but should not need to be addressed as a temporary solution. These items include the following:

1. Gymnasium unit coils are wearing out and leaking. Due to the number of units, you should be able to limp through by using worn out units as sources of spare parts until a permanent plan can be developed.
2. Temperature Controls: The building uses obsolete pneumatic controls. For this type of system, spare parts are limited. Heating valves were found failed open or closed causing space comfort issues. This condition is very noticeable in cold weather when building windows are opened to control space temperature.
  - a. The controls in the 1997 addition are Digital Controls but are obsolete. This is not an unusual issue with 20+ year old computer equipment. This is causing the system to be non-accessible by maintenance staff. This means no adjustability or control. This creates comfort issues and waste energy.
3. Classroom Ventilation Units: With the exception of the 1998 building addition, all classrooms in the building are served with Unit Ventilators. These are typically floor mounted equipment but can also be ceiling mounted. They contain a fan and heating coil. In addition, they are connected to the building exterior to provide the space with ventilation air. These units typically have a service life of 30 years. Most of the units in the building are original 1955 or 1962. These units have a replacement installed cost of \$18,000 per unit.
4. Plumbing Fixtures: As a temporary solution no consideration was given to modifying the existing building plumbing system. Fixtures in the building are aging but are functional. There are reports of issues with the sewer main piping crumbling. Without removing floors and completely remodeling toilet spaces the sewer piping should be addressed on a per case basis.

The following is a breakdown of items that are recommended to be addressed immediately to keep building operational until a long-term solution can be developed.

**Boilers:** The installed boilers are steam. Steam is a heating medium that is not a long-term solution for the building. If the building is remodeled or a new building is built neither will utilize steam. Therefore, any money put into the existing boiler system is sunk cost. Keeping that in mind, there are really three possible options for building heating plant:

**Option 1:** Do nothing and gamble that 70-year-old equipment will hold out for the 3-5 years until a long-term solution is completed.

**Option 2:** Rebuild the existing boilers. Retube the existing boilers and patch the worn-out metal sections as required. Relocate the existing newer burner from the parts boiler to replace the older boiler burner.



Option 3: Remove two of three and install a new steam boiler.

Speaking with the service company that has most recently serviced the boiler equipment, Montana Boiler Service, they expressed the following concerns:

1. A complete internal inspection should be completed on the boiler.
2. Several tubes have been plugged in both operating boilers. These boilers will probably need retubing during this temporary service window.
3. In the bottom corners of the boiler front and back are access points called hand holes. These allow for mud or sludge that will settle out of the boiler water to be flushed out of the boiler. If the sludge is not removed from the boiler corrosion, diminished heat transfer and wall failure can develop. These access points in a steam boiler are typically steel plates with a gasket between the plate and the boiler wall sealing the two plates. There is evidence that the boiler walls have corroded enough that the gasket will no longer seal the opening, and a sealant has been required to prevent leaks. This is normally a stop gap means not a normal service protocol. Concern with the use of sealant is that the lower water legs of the building will need to be replaced.

#### Estimated Budget

Option 1: \$75,000 to \$100,000 and cross your fingers.

Option 2: \$200,000 to \$250,000 planned maintenance to stabilize the equipment in place.

Option 3: \$400,000 to \$475,000 projects which allows for a longer solution possibly up to 10 years.

Air Handling Equipment: The unit failure in the Auditorium is an issue. Without the unit no public functions should take place in the Auditorium. The room is equipped with perimeter heat so there is no fear of room freezing. The existing unit is not located in a location where a new unit can be installed. To restore space ventilation there are two options:

Option 1: Remove the unit and work with a local machine shop to reconstruct the deteriorating parts. Then reinstall the unit and hope nothing else fails. The existing fan shaft bracket issue normally requires replacement of the mounts, blower shaft, bearings, etc.

Option 2: Install a new air handling unit on the building exterior and extend ductwork to the existing duct connections.

#### Estimated Budget

Option 1: \$45,000 to \$60,000 and hope no additional issues arise in the unit which is 70 years old.

Option 2: \$100,000 to \$125,000 This equipment could be re-used in a long-term building solution or new building if desired.

Building Condensate System: The pumps and piping issues are really interconnected. The pumps are being damaged due to age and the failure of the building steam traps. The failed traps allow raw steam to enter the condensate piping. This steam heats what moisture in the piping. In an operating steam system condensate is typically 5-8°F below boiling temperature. Condensate

pumps prefer to operate at less than 205°F. When the fluid temperature rises above this, pump motors and seals fail. This causes operational issues and fluid leaks. Service life on condensate pumps is 20-30 years. This equipment is 60+ years old.

It would be recommended to change the installed condensate units. But if we do not change the upstream steam traps changing the pump will not prevent the current service cycle. There are approximately 240 steam traps in the building. Steam traps are damaged due to age and water. When changing steam traps in an existing system it is always recommended to change all units on a single condensate loop. If all are not changed any failed units can damage any new units downstream of it.

There is approximately 5,600 linear feet of condensate piping in the building crawlspaces. There are 360 different risers from the crawlspace to heating units distributed throughout the building. There are approximately 520 steam traps in the building.

Based on the condition of the pumps trap and piping there are a couple of different scenarios available:

Option 1: Replace the condensate and a limited amount of the condensate piping. This is the minimal solution. This option deals with immediate needs only. The primary issue is existing piping insulation contains asbestos. Meaning to replace damaged piping or equipment first the asbestos needs to be removed. Asbestos removal is easier if it is done in an organized plan rather than piece meal.

Option 2: Replace the condensate pumps, heating equipment steam traps and the crawlspace horizontal condensate piping. This planned complete replacement would allow abatement to be completed wing by wing. Once a wing is completed additional maintenance should not be required for 10-15 years.

The piping failure is widespread but not significant to make the system non-operational. Even if all the horizontal piping is replaced it does not mean there will not be issues. Vertical piping risers both steam and condensate are concealed within walls throughout the building. Due to their limited access, we did not consider any effort to resolve these in a temporary solution.

Estimated Budget: Neither of these budgets include any cost to remove the insulation asbestos. That work is beyond my scope or expertise.

#### Estimated Budget

Option 1: \$1,300,000 to \$1,500,000 and cross your fingers remembering the piping is 70 years old. Any major piping leak could disable the heating system or create an asbestos incident.

Option 2: \$1,900,000 to \$2,125,000 This option would replace all piping over a 2–3-year process. There is insufficient time horizon between heating seasons to completely replace the piping in a single effort.

Schedules:

Boiler Work: It is possible if scheduled soon to complete most of Option 2 during Summer 2025. There are limited contractors in the state of Montana that can complete this work therefore their schedules fill up quickly and should be scheduled as soon as practical.

There is insufficient time to receive a boiler replacement therefore a new boiler install would need to wait till summer 2026 at the earliest.

Ventilation Equipment:

Option 1 Unit Repair: With the unit inoperable work could commence at any time. The primary issue is asbestos abatement. To correctly correct the issue the unit should be moved out to get to the back of the unit. It is possible to schedule abatement during spring break allowing the unit to be rebuilt this spring and summer.

Option 2 Unit Replacement: Due to equipment availability if a unit was ordered by the first of May the unit could be installed prior to next year's heating season.

Condensate Piping: Any work on the condensate piping can take place from the day the heating system is turned off for the year and 1-week prior to starting the heating system for the fall. Mid-May to Early October. Any asbestos abatement work could be completed in a 1-2-week period. Without insulation the spaces will be warmer if not re-insulated but could remain in operation. Allowing abatement to take place during school breaks prior to Due to the amount of the piping, it will take a minimum of 2-years to replace all the piping.

Conclusion: The building heating system is not healthy, and work will need to be completed to keep it operating. The piping is leaking, and it will only get worse. If major sections of the piping fail and create an asbestos clean-up issue school function could be interrupted. The boilers are on borrowed time. The auditorium issue is an immediate need. These are the items that a basic plan review and building inspection has uncovered. As with any older facility there will always be other issues that could arise.

In our discussions it was mentioned that the district has deferred maintenance funds. If a portion of the funds could be prioritized to the building for the next 2-3 years, the system could be stabilized for building operation for the next 4-8 years.

I look forward to discussing these or additional options with you and your staff in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey A. Gruizenga". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized initial "J" and "G".

Jeffrey A. Gruizenga, PE

**HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**Board of Trustees Meeting**

**Item VI.**

**Meeting Date:** 2/25/2025

☐ Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance

☐ Review of Agenda

☐ General Public Comment

☐ Presentation

☐ Consent Action Items

☐ Item For Information

☒ Board Comments

☐ Adjournment

**Item Title:**      **Board Comments**

**HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**Board of Trustees Meeting**

**Item VII.**

**Meeting Date:** 2/25/2025

☐ Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance

☐ Review of Agenda

☐ General Public Comment

☐ Presentation

☐ Consent Action Items

☐ Item For Information

☐ Board Comments

☒ Adjournment

**Item Title:**     **Adjournment**