



Board of Trustees Policy Committee Meeting

Tuesday, February 4th, 2025

12:00 p.m.

Lincoln Center

1325 Poplar St., Helena, MT 59601

And via

TEAMS

MINUTES

Attendees

Committee:

Jennifer Walsh, Committee Chair
Linda Cleatus, Trustee
Janet Armstrong, Trustee

Others:

Josh McKay, Assistant Superintendent
Barb Ridgway, Chief of Staff
Todd Verrill, Facilities Director
Jane Shawn, HEA President
Rex Weltz, Superintendent
Lona Carter, Student Health Services &
Special Education Director
Candice Delvaux, Executive Assistant
Gary Myers, Director of Educational
Technology
Keri Mizell, Human Resources Director
Karen Ogden, Communications Officer
Janelle Mickelson, Business Director
Justine Alberts, Curriculum Director
Lisa Cordingley, HEF Executive Director
Bea Kaleva, District Legal Counsel

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 12:05 p.m. by Policy Committee Chair, Trustee Jennifer Walsh. Following the call-to-order, members of the Policy Committee and other attendees introduced themselves.

II. REVIEW OF AGENDA

No changes were requested to the agenda.

III. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no general public comment.

IV. REVIEW OF THE 1.7.2025 POLICY COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Policy Committee reviewed and accepted the minutes from the January Policy Committee meeting.

V. POLCIES FOR SECOND READING: HAVE GONE FOR FULL BOARD 1ST READING

A. Policy 1075: Records Management and Access to Public Records

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 1075: Records Management and Access to Public Records*. This policy was previously presented to the Board of Trustees for its first reading, during which no recommended changes were proposed. The Policy Committee determined that *Policy 1075: Records Management and Access to Public Records* will be presented to the Board of Trustees for action at the upcoming full board meeting.

B. Policy 2000: Student Instructional Goals

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 2000: Student Instructional Goals*. This policy was previously presented to the Board of Trustees for its first reading, during which no recommended changes were proposed. The Policy Committee determined that *Policy 2000: Student Instructional Goals* will be presented to the Board of Trustees for action at the upcoming full board meeting.

VI. POLCIES FOR SECOND READING: RETURNING TO COMMITTEE FOR 2ND READING

A. Policy 5000: Equal Employment Opportunity and Non-Discrimination

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 5000: Equal Employment Opportunity and Non-Discrimination*. The Policy Committee recommended the removal of the phrase “and will not discriminate in its educational programs or activities, including in the area of employment” on lines 9 and 10. Additionally, the committee proposed adding the phrase

“genetic information” after *“gender identity”* on line 11. This revision is being made to comply with Title IX requirements. The Policy Committee determined that *Policy 5000: Equal Employment Opportunity and Non-Discrimination* will be presented to the Board of Trustees for information at the upcoming full board meeting.

B. Policy 5050: State of Montana: VEBA Health Benefit Plan

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 5050: State of Montana: VEBA Health Benefit Plan*. This is the second time the Policy Committee has reviewed the policy, and it has not yet been presented to the full Board of Trustees. Business Manager Janelle Mickelson provided additional context regarding the VEBA Health Benefit Plan, including its history within the district. Following a thorough discussion, the Policy Committee recommends the repeal of this policy. As it has not been updated since 2016 and given changes in program requirements, the committee determined that, should a request to participate in VEBA arise, an updated policy will be presented to the Board for approval. The Policy Committee determined that *Policy 5050: State of Montana: VEBA Health Benefit Plan* will be presented to the Board of Trustees for information at the upcoming full board meeting with a recommendation to repeal the policy.

C. Policy 5055: Leave of Absence

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 5055: Leave of Absence*. A thorough discussion was held regarding bereavement leave, during which it was noted that Title 2 employees are not entitled to bereavement leave. According to Title 2 guidelines, these employees must utilize their sick leave. Regarding lines 29 through 37, the committee agreed that the only remaining language would be, *“Employees covered by a collective bargaining agreement will be granted bereavement leave according to the terms of their collective bargaining agreement,”* with all other content in this section to be removed. The committee also recognized that this matter will need to be addressed during the renegotiation of classified collective bargaining agreements. Additionally, the committee engaged in an in-depth discussion regarding the language on lines 14 through 26 related to sick leave. It was determined that this section requires revision, including the removal of the language: *“A maximum of ten (10) days of accumulated sick leave may be used per year because of a death in the immediate family.”* The Policy Committee agreed that *Policy 5055: Leave of Absence* will return for further review at a future meeting once the revisions have been made.

D. Policy 5085: Substitutes and Student Teachers/Interns

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 5085: Substitutes and Student Teachers/Interns*. A thorough discussion ensued, particularly regarding the language on lines 16 through 18, which states: *“Substitutes for classified positions will be paid by the hour. When a classified employee is called upon to substitute for a teacher, the teacher sub rate*

shall apply unless the classified rate of pay is higher.” The committee agreed that these two sentences should be separated into two distinct paragraphs for greater clarity. Ms. Ridgway, Chief of Staff, indicated that she would implement this change, and *Policy 5085: Substitutes and Student Teachers/Interns* was noted as reviewed.

VII. PRESENTATION OF POLICIES FOR PERIODIC REVIEW

A. Policy 5090: Employee Electronic Services

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 5090: Employee Electronic Services* and a thorough discussion was held regarding lines 11 through 18. No changes were recommended, and the Policy Committee noted *Policy 5090: Employee Electronic Services* as reviewed.

B. Policy 6000: District Organization Superintendent and District Clerk

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 6000: District Organization Superintendent and District Clerk*. The committee noted that if the STARS Act is enacted, certain language in this policy may require revision. Should the STARS Act pass, the committee will revisit the policy for further review. No changes were recommended at this time, and the Policy Committee noted *Policy 6000: District Organization Superintendent and District Clerk* as reviewed.

C. Policy 7000: Fiscal and Business Management

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 7000: Fiscal and Business Management*. No changes were recommended, and the Policy Committee noted *Policy 7000: Fiscal and Business Management* as reviewed.

D. Policy 7007: Accounting Standards

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 7007: Accounting Standards*. No changes were recommended, and the Policy Committee noted *Policy 7007: Accounting Standards* as reviewed.

E. Policy 7010: Purchasing

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 7010: Purchasing*. A thorough discussion was held regarding the language on lines 21 and 22, which states, “*Whenever the cost of any supplies, equipment, or work shall exceed \$80,000, the District will call for formal bids by issuing public notice as specified by law.*” No changes were recommended, and the Policy Committee noted *Policy 7010: Purchasing* as reviewed.

F. Policy 7030: Accounting and Audits

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 7030: Accounting and Audits*. No changes were recommended, and the Policy Committee noted *Policy 7030: Accounting and Audits* as reviewed.

VIII. SUPERINTENDENT OR BOARD COMMENTS

There were no further comments.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Jennifer Walsh adjourned the meeting at 1:07 p.m.