



## Board of Trustees Meeting

Lincoln Center | 1325 Poplar St. | Helena, MT 59601

Tuesday, February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2025 - 5:30 p.m.

Lincoln Board of Trustees Conference Room and  
via TEAMS

[Join the meeting now](#)

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### AGENDA

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

II. **REVIEW OF AGENDA**

III. **RECOGNITIONS**

A. **2025 Montana Thespian Festival Recognition-Capital High School**

The Board of Trustees would like to extend its sincere congratulations to the following Capital High School students for their exceptional accomplishments at the 2025 Montana Thespian Festival: Lexi Flath – Recognized with the Outstanding Debut Performance Award and Raine Lafond – Honored as a State Thespian Officer & Festival Liaison. These students have shown extraordinary skill, passion, and dedication to their craft, and their accomplishments reflect the high standard of excellence at Capital High School. Special thanks to educator Laura Brayko for her unwavering support and dedication, which have been instrumental in the success of these students and the theater program.

B. **2025 Montana Thespian Festival Recognition-Helena High School**

The Board of Trustees would like to extend its sincere congratulations to the following Helena High School students for their exceptional accomplishments at the 2025 Montana Thespian Festival: Karl Zimmerman - Outstanding Costumes Award, and Nadja Bolotsky and Luke Wilkins - Outstanding Performers. Additionally, the Board is pleased to recognize the entire Helena High School Theater Troupe for receiving the Outstanding Troupe Award and Outstanding Comedy Award. These students have shown extraordinary skill, passion, and dedication to their craft, and their accomplishments reflect the high standard of excellence at Capital High School. Special thanks to Roger Scruggs and Madelyn Sechrist for their unwavering support and dedication, which have been instrumental in the success of these students and the theater program.

C. **United States Presidential Scholars Program-Capital High School**

Congratulations to the following Capital High School students who have been selected as candidates for the prestigious United States Presidential Scholars Program: Meika Arensmeyer, Kathleen Cook, Adeline Walters, and Mason Whitney. This honor recognizes these students as some of the nation's most distinguished students, celebrated for their academic excellence, leadership, and commitment to their education. This remarkable achievement is a testament to their hard work and the dedication of the educators who have supported them along the way. We extend our heartfelt thanks to all who have contributed to their success.

D. **United States Presidential Scholars Program-Helena High School**

Congratulations to Helena High School student, Evelyn Callery, who has been selected as a candidate for the prestigious United States Presidential Scholars Program. This honor recognizes Evelyn as one of the nation's most distinguished students, celebrated for her academic excellence, leadership, and commitment to her education. This remarkable achievement is a testament to Evelyn's hard work and the dedication of the educators who have supported her along the way. We extend our heartfelt thanks to all who have contributed to her success.

E. **Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST)**

It is with great pride and admiration that we extend our sincere congratulations to Capital High School educators Sarah Urban and Jake Warner, who have been selected to receive the prestigious Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST). This esteemed honor, administered by the National Science Foundation (NSF) on behalf of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, celebrates exemplary educators for their exceptional contributions to the teaching and learning of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). As recipients of this award, Sarah and Jake will each receive a certificate signed by the President and a monetary award from the NSF. Additionally, they will be invited to Washington, D.C., for an awards ceremony in recognition of their outstanding achievements. We commend Sarah and Jake for their dedication, passion, and remarkable impact on the lives of their students, and we are proud to see their efforts celebrated on a national level. Congratulations once again to these exceptional educators!

F. **Montana DECA Advisor of the Year**

It is with great pride and admiration that we extend our sincere congratulations to Kacey Askin, an exceptional educator at Helena High School, for being named the Montana DECA Advisor of the Year at the State DECA Conference. This prestigious recognition is a testament to Kacey's dedication, leadership, and unwavering commitment to his students. His tireless efforts have made a lasting impact on the DECA program, and this award reflects the remarkable contributions he has made to the educational community. We applaud Kacey for his outstanding achievements and are honored to celebrate this well-deserved recognition.

#### IV. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

#### V. 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.*

#### VI. NEW BUSINESS

##### A. Consent Action Items

1. Personnel Actions
2. Warrants
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)
5. 1.14.25 Board of Trustees Full Board Meeting Minutes
6. Approval of Sabbaticals for 2025-2026 School Year

##### B. Items For Action

1. Call for Annual Election
  - a. Elementary Trustee Resolution Calling for the Annual Regular Election
  - b. High School Trustee Resolution Calling for the Annual Regular Election
2. Capital High School Auditorium Stage Lighting Upgrade Project
3. Calendar Committee Proposal for the 2025-2026 School Calendar
4. Policy 1075 Records Management and Access to Public Records
5. Policy 2000 Student Instructional Goals

##### C. Items For Information

1. Policy 5000 Equal Employment Opportunity and Non-Discrimination
2. Policy 5050 State of Montana VEBA Health Benefit Plan

**D. Reports**

1. Student Representatives Report
2. Helena Education Association Report
3. Facilities & Technology Committee Report
4. Budget & Finance Committee Report
5. Policy Committee Report
6. Teaching & Learning Committee Report
7. Health Benefits Committee Report
8. Wellness Committee Report
9. Montana School Boards Association Report
10. Parent Council Visit Report

VII. UPCOMING MEETINGS

VIII. BOARD COMMENTS

IX. ADJOURNMENT

HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Board of Trustees Meeting

Item I.

Meeting Date: 2/11/2025

Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Review of Agenda

Recognitions

Superintendent's Report

General Public Comment

Consent Action Items

Items For Action

Items For Information

Reports

Upcoming Meetings

Board Comments

Adjournment

Item Title: Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance

HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Board of Trustees Meeting

Item II.

**Meeting Date:** 2/11/2025

Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Review of Agenda

Recognitions

Superintendent's Report

General Public Comment

Consent Action Items

Items For Action

Items For Information

Reports

Upcoming Meetings

Board Comments

Adjournment

**Item Title:** Review of Agenda

**HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Board of Trustees Meeting**

**Item III.**

**Meeting Date:** 2/11/2025

Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Review of Agenda

Recognitions

Superintendent's Report

General Public Comment

Consent Action Items

Items For Action

Items For Information

Reports

Upcoming Meetings

Board Comments

Adjournment

**Item Title:      Recognitions**

- A. 2025 Montana Thespian Festival Recognition-Capital High School
- B. 2025 Montana Thespian Festival Recognition-Helena High School
- C. United States Presidential Scholars Program-Capital High School
- D. United States Presidential Scholars Program-Helena High School
- E. Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST)
- F. Montana DECA Advisor of the Year

HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Board of Trustees Meeting

Item IV.

**Meeting Date:** 2/11/2025

Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Review of Agenda

Recognitions

Superintendent's Report

General Public Comment

Consent Action Items

Items For Action

Items For Information

Reports

Upcoming Meetings

Board Comments

Adjournment

**Item Title:** Superintendent's Report



HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT #1  
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

To: Board Chair Ms. Siobhan Hathorn and Board of Trustees  
FROM: Mr. Wetz, Superintendent  
RE: Superintendent Report  
DATE: February 11th, 2025

- Recognition
  - I want to extend our district's deepest thanks to all who donated to Helena Public Schools through the Montana Innovative Educational Tax Credit Program. Thank you for investing in our students' futures.
  - Board of Trustees Work Session At Four Georgians Elementary School- January 28<sup>th</sup>, Thank You Principal Carrie Shinkle & Four Georgians Staff
  - Congratulations to the following 105.3 KMTX Teacher of the Month Recipient for January:
    - Mrs. Wilma Tabaracci- Warren Elementary School
  - February 3-7 National School Counseling Appreciation Week
  - February 15 National School Resource Officer Appreciation Day
  - Thank you to the Board of Public Education for touring our Helena Charter Schools. Special thanks to Assistant Superintendent Josh McKay and Chief of Staff Barb Ridgway for organizing these visits and Sodexo for generously donating lunch.
  - Thank you to Lisa Cordingley and the Helena Education Foundation for hosting a Trustee Appreciation Lunch. We deeply appreciate their recognition of our Board of Trustees and their ongoing support of our schools and community.
  
  - LC Recognition
  
- New Business
  - USI Data Dive
  - Technology 2025 Levy
  - Master Facilities Planning
    - Pre Bond-Work - SMA
      - Helena High School
      - Capital High School
      - Kessler Elementary
        - Activity Facilities Pre-Planning
  - County Elections Office Meeting – Timing
  - 2025 Legislative Session – Busy
  - Winter Conditions Across the District
  - Central Elementary/SMA Klint Fisher Memorial Project
  - Helena High School, Capital High School, and Kessler Elementary School Site Visit by the Facilities and Technology Committee

HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT #1  
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

- Summer Jumpstart Program
  - Continuing Work with CMS To Develop Compensation Manual and Classification Tool
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Enrollment Count – Completed
  - Food Service RFP
  - Copier RFP
  - Accreditation Process
  - Work Compensation RFP
  - Other
- 
- Outreach/Meetings
    - Public Education Day of Advocacy
      - Coalition of Advocates
      - MFPE Day Of Advocacy Feb 17<sup>th</sup>
    - Lewis & Clark County Elections Meeting
    - AA Superintendent’s Meeting with Susie Hedalen-Superintendent of Public Instruction
    - AA Superintendents/Counsel Winter Summit
    - Parent Advisory Committee
    - Teacher Advisory Committee – Rescheduled
      - Elementary Parent Teacher Conferences
    - SAM
    - AA Superintendents
    - Board Leadership
    - Hometown Helena
    - HSD/HEA Meeting
    - HEF
    - HEF-Executive Committee
    - Cabinet & Leadership
    - TV, Print, Radio Media
    - Shodair Children’s Hospital – Funding Meeting
    - Other
- 
- Other
    - February 17<sup>th</sup>, President’s Day-No School K-12

HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Board of Trustees Meeting

Item V.

**Meeting Date:** 2/11/2025

Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Review of Agenda

Recognitions

Superintendent's Report

General Public Comment

Consent Action Items

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Adjournment

**Item Title:** General Public Comment

**HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Board of Trustees Meeting**

**Meeting Date:** 2/11/2025

**Item VI.A.1 - A.6**

- Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance
- Review of Agenda
- Recognitions
- Superintendent's Report
- General Public Comment
- Consent Action Items
- Items For Action
- Items For Information
- Reports
- Upcoming Meetings
- Board Comments
- Adjournment

- Item Title:      Consent Action Items**
1. Personnel Actions
  2. Warrants
  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)
  5. 1.14.25 Board of Trustees Full Board Meeting Minutes
  6. Approval of Sabbaticals for 2025-2026 School Year

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

## PERSONNEL ACTIONS

January 29, 2025 – February 11, 2025

### CERTIFIED PERSONNEL

#### Appointments

<u>Location/Assignment</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Offered Salary</u>	<u>Accepted Salary</u>	<u>Start Date</u>
HHS/Mathematics	Ballard, Mikelle	\$229.26/day	\$229.26/day	02/03/2025 ***

\*\*Prorated salary

\*\*\*Long term substitute

#### Terminations/Retirements

<u>Location/Assignment</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Reason</u>	<u>Effective</u>
CRA/Mathematics	Schauman, William	Retirement	06/10/2025
HHS/Mathematics	Walsh, Victoria	Resignation	06/11/2025*
Jim Darcy-Rossiter/School Nurse	Wellenstein, Cori	Resignation	06/10/2025

\*Resignation date correction

### CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL

#### Appointments

<u>Location/Assignment</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Offered Salary</u>	<u>Accepted Salary</u>	<u>Start Date</u>
Central/Para Educator	Sweet, Trevor	\$17.07/hr.	\$17.07/hr.	01/27/2025

**Terminations/Retirements**

**Location/Assignment**

Central/Para Educator

Helena Educ. Foundation/Exec. Dir.

**Name**

Benham, Adrianna

Cordingley, Lisa

**Reason**

Resignation

Retirement

**Effective**

02/14/2025

06/30/2025

# Helena School District #1

## Warrants January 1 to 31, 2025

Direct Deposits: \$3,329,819.75

Payroll Warrants: 70132092-70132116

Payroll Deduction: 69303168-69303192

Non-Check Payroll Deductions: \$ 5,293,821.33

Non-Check Accts Payable Deductions: \$ 1,231,644.18

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

Claim Warrants: 69302968-69303359

CRA Middle School Student Activity Checks: 17452-17454

HMS Middle School Student Activity Checks:

Capital High Student Activity Checks: 24858-24896

Helena High Student Activity Checks: 36819-36859

Cancelled Warrants: \$2,709.24

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 \_\_\_\_\_

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

**Fiscal Year 2024-25**

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**Discretionary Attendance:**

Grade	District of Residence	Address	School of Attendance
1	Trinity Elementary	Helena, MT 59602	Kessler Elementary
1	Trinity Elementary	Helena, MT 59602	Kessler Elementary
2	East Helena K-12	East Helena, MT 59635	Four Georgians Elementary
2	Clancy Elementary	Clancy, MT 59634	Hawthorne Elementary
6	Clancy Elementary	Clancy, MT 59634	CR Anderson Middle School
7	Trinity Elementary	Helena, MT 59602	CR Anderson Middle School
10	Jefferson High School	Clancy, MT 59634	Helena High School
10	Jefferson High School	Montana City, MT 59634	Helena High School
11	East Helena K-12	East Helena, MT 59635	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	Boulder	Elliston	Trinity	Chinook	Butte	Billings	Deer Lodge	Missoula	Townsend	Radersberg	Browning	Winston	Whitehall	Total
<b>Ksprouts</b>	3								1											4
<b>K</b>	4	1				1			5										1	12
<b>1</b>	8	4							5											17
<b>2</b>	6	1				1	1	1	4										1	15
<b>3</b>	2	1							6	1										10
<b>4</b>	6	2							4											12
<b>5</b>	6		1				1		9		1	1								19
<b>6</b>	5	1						1	3		1									11
<b>7</b>	3	2				1			5											11
<b>8</b>	3	5	1			1		1	3				1							15
<b>9</b>	7	50	10											1						68
<b>10</b>	9	27	2												1	1	1			41
<b>11</b>	12	19	4		3															38
<b>12</b>	12	27	3		2										1	1		1		47
	86	140	21	5	1	3	2	3	45	1	2		1	1	2	2	1	1	2	320

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	Aware CFE

**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	34
11	19			4		4							27
12	25			4		2			2	1			34
	198	72	51	13	5	8	1	1	3	1	1	3	357



**Superintendent**

Rex Wertz  
324-2001

**Business Manager**

Janelle Mickelson  
324-2040

## **Board of Trustees Meeting**

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

**Tuesday, January 14th, 2025**  
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 Wertz, Superintendent  
Josh McKay, Assistant Superintendent  
Janelle Mickelson, Business Director  
Barb Ridgway, Chief of Staff  
Todd Verrill, Facilities Director  
Keri Mizell, Human Resources Director  
Gary Myers, Director of Educational Technology  
Justine Alberts, Curriculum Director  
Kaitlyn Hess, Data and Federal Programs Director  
Jane Shawn, HEA President  
Lona Carter, Student Health Services & Special Education Director  
Karen Ogden, Communications Officer  
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 5:30 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**II. REVIEW AGENDA**

The Board of Trustees reviewed the agenda and there were no suggested changes.

The Board of Trustees moved on to the recognitions portion of the agenda.

**III. RECOGNITIONS**

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

**2024 All Northwest Honor Orchestra**

Congratulations to the following students for their acceptance into the prestigious All Northwest Honor Orchestra: Elliot Cleary (violin) and Freya Elias (cello) from Helena High School, and Hollis Elliott (cello) and Charlie Snellman (cello) from Capital High School. These talented musicians were selected from a competitive pool of students from Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington, and Wyoming. We celebrate these students' exceptional achievements and express our gratitude to educator Kevin Cleary for his dedication and support in guiding these young musicians to success.

**National Board-Certified Teachers**

The Board of Trustees would like to extend its sincerest congratulations to the following exceptional educators in the Helena School District for their outstanding achievement of earning National Board Certification: Kellen Alger, Jody Branting, Emily Lynn, Hermes Lynn, Kaci Matthies, Jean Placko, Andrew Roberts, Jennifer Schaefer, Andrew Sund, and Holly Westerberg. This prestigious certification is a testament to their dedication to the highest standards of teaching and their unwavering commitment to fostering excellence in education. The Board is proud to recognize their hard work, perseverance, and exceptional contributions to the educational community. We congratulate each of these individuals for their remarkable accomplishment and thank them for their continued dedication to enriching the lives of students in our district.

The Board of Trustees moved on to review the Superintendent's Report.

**IV. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

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

- Superintendent Weltz acknowledged the recent passing of former Trustee Terry Beaver's wife and extended his heartfelt condolences to Trustee Beaver and his family during this difficult time.

- Superintendent Wertz acknowledged the ongoing fires in Southern California and extended his thoughts to those affected by the disaster.
- Recognition
  - Mr. Snellman
  - I would like to extend heartfelt thanks to all our staff and students for their incredible efforts in supporting our community and students this holiday season. Through food drives, toy collections, fundraisers, and various service projects, their generosity has made a meaningful impact on those in need. We are truly grateful for their dedication to making this time of year brighter for others. In addition to helping families in need, these annual projects allow our students to experience the joy of giving and plant the seeds of community spirit.
  - Congratulations to the following 105.3 KMTX Teacher of the Month Recipients:
    - Mrs. Libby Kenney-Central Elementary School-November
    - Mrs. Dana Richards-C.R. Anderson Middle School-December
  - January-School Board Recognition Month
  - January 9th-National Law Enforcement Appreciation Day
  - Thank you to the Helena Education Foundation for their generous distribution of grants to our exceptional educators across the district this past December.
  - Congratulations to Kyle Mihelish who has been selected as the AA Football Coach of the Year by the Montana Coaches Association (MCA).
  - Congratulations to Capital High School educators Jake Warner and Sarah Urban who have received the Presidential Award for Excellence in mathematics and science teaching.
- New Business
  - Registration for Fall 2025 Kindergarten started Wednesday, January 8th
  - Montana’s Innovative Educational Program (IEP) Tax Credit
  - Transportation – Winter Conditions
  - Summer Jumpstart Program
  - Continuing Work with CMS To Develop Compensation Manual and Classification Tool
  - Office Of Civil Rights Report
  - 2nd Enrollment Count
  - Power School Incident – Technology
  - Food Service RFP
  - Work Compensation RFP
  - Copier RFP
  - Accreditation Process
  - 2025 Legislative Session
  - Priorities – School Administrators of Montana
  - Legislative Bills
  - Technology Levy Planning 3-2-1
  - Master Facilities Planning
    - Pre Bond-Work - SMA
      - Helena High School

- Capital High School
  - Kessler Elementary
    - Activity Facilities Pre-Planning
- Outreach/Meetings
  - Parent Advisory Committee
  - Teacher Advisory Committee
  - 340b Rx Discussion
  - SAM
  - AA Superintendents
  - Board Leadership
  - Hometown Helena
  - Quarterly Meeting with the City of Helena
  - HSD/HEA Meeting
  - HEF
  - HEF-Executive Committee
  - Cabinet & Leadership
  - TV, Print, Radio, Media
  - Shodair Children’s Hospital – Projects and Support
- Other
  - January 20th, Martin Luther King Jr. Day-No School K-12
  - January 27th, HS Staff In-Service & Records Day, No School K-12

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

## V. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Jennifer Skogley gave general public comment. Ms. Skogley is an elementary music educator for Helena Public Schools. Ms. Skogley’s general public comment addressed several key topics including but not limited to challenges associated with the scheduling this year such as challenges with pacing in music curriculum, a delay in establishing classroom routines, increased behavior management issues, and instructional gaps due to schedule interruptions.

Mr. Christopher Nevinski gave general public comment. Mr. Nevinski is a middle school music educator for Helena Public Schools. Mr. Nevinski’s general public comment addressed several key topics including but not limited to challenges associated with the scheduling this year such as concern about the incoming 6<sup>th</sup> graders lacking essential music background due to reduced instruction time, and apprehension regarding the future of the school’s music program if current trends continue.

Mr. Kevin Cleary gave general public comment. Mr. Cleary is a high school music educator for Helena Public Schools. Mr. Cleary’s general public comment addressed several key topics including but not limited to sharing his concerns about the impact of reduced elementary music instruction on middle and high school students' skills and highlighted the importance of a strong elementary music program, referencing the positive impact it had on his own children and its value in supporting students' progression through the school system.

Ms. Moffie Funk gave general public comment. Ms. Funk is a parent of two Helena Public School District graduates and a former teacher. Ms. Funk’s general public comment addressed several key topics including but not limited to acknowledging the importance of community involvement and advocacy for public education, emphasizing the need for a strong presence at the Capitol to influence legislative decisions and encouraged board members, parents, community members, and students to engage with legislators directly, noting the effectiveness of personal interaction in driving change.

That concluded general public comment, and the Board of Trustees moved on to review the consent action items.

## **VI. NEW BUSINESS**

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

1. Personnel Actions
2. Warrants
3. Approval of FY 2024-25 Out-Of-District Attendance Agreements (Nonresident Students Attending Helena School District)
4. 12.10.24 Board of Trustees Full Board Meeting Minutes
5. Resolution to Dispose of Personal Property-HMS Work Out Equipment 24-25

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 Kay Satre seconded the motion.

**Public Comment:** None.

**Vote:** 8-0 motion carries unanimously.

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



## **B. Items for Action**

### **1. Approval of Autism and Cognitive Disorder Certification**

Ms. Keri Mizell, Human Resources Director for Helena Public Schools, introduced the action item, *Approval of Autism and Cognitive Disorder Certification*, to the Board of Trustees.

#### **Background:**

The Collective Bargaining Agreement between Helena School District and the Helena Education Association (HEA) states that all certification applications recommended for inclusion for lane advancement must be approved by the Board of Trustees and the HEA Board of Directors. If approved, the inclusion would be effective for the 25-26 fiscal year. Currently, there are ten certifications approved for a Board Certification Lane:

- National Board Certification from the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards
- Certification of Clinical Competency for Speech Pathology
- Nationally Certified School Psychologists Credential from the National Association of School Psychologists
- The Board-Certified Behavior Analyst Certification from the Behavior Analyst Certification Board
- Board Certification through the National Board for Certified Occupational Therapists
- Board Certification for Physical Therapists through the Montana Board of Examiners and the American Physical Therapy Association
- Registered Nurse License from the National Council of State Boards of Nursing
- Board Certification from the National Board for Certification of School Nurses
- Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor from the Montana State Board of Behavioral Health
- National Certified Counselor from the National Board of Certified Counselors

The Board Certification Committee reviewed the submission for inclusion of the Autism and Cognitive Disorder Certification from the International Board of Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards (IBCCES). On December 12, 2024, the Board Certification Committee recommended inclusion. The HEA Board of Directors approved the recommendation on December 17, 2024.

Currently, one educator has requested lane movement for the successful completion of the certification at an estimated cost of \$8,235.86 for the 25-26 fiscal year.

Recommendation:

Approve the inclusion of the Autism and Cognitive Disorder Certification from the International Board of Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards (IBCCES) for a Board Certification Lane.

Ms. Mizell addressed all questions proposed by the trustees regarding the action item *Approval of Autism and Cognitive Disorder Certification*.

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn commented, “At this point I would entertain a motion to approve the *Autism and Cognitive Disorder Certification* as presented.”

**Motion:** Trustee Jeff Hindoién moved to approve the inclusion of the Autism and Cognitive Disorder Certification from the International Board of Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards (IBCCES) for a Board Certification Lane in the collective bargaining agreement between the school district and HEA. Trustee Linda Cleatus seconded the motion.

**Public Comment:** None.

**Vote:** 8-0 motion carries unanimously.

2. **Approval of the Montana Advanced Opportunity Grant-Elementary District**

Mr. Josh McKay, Assistant Superintendent for Helena Public Schools, presented the action item *Approval of the Montana Advanced Opportunity Grant-Elementary District* to the Board of Trustees. The Advanced Opportunities Grant in the Helena School District for Grades 9-12 provides funding to reduce student and family costs for educational opportunities. The grant, amounting to around \$200,000 annually, covers 75% of expenses like AP test fees and online course fees. The remaining 25% supports career and technical education (CTE) expenses, including materials, safety equipment, and certifications. This funding helps make advanced courses more accessible and offsets costs associated with college credit and CTE programs, benefiting students' academic and career preparation.

Mr. McKay shared this evening he is asking the board for approval of an Advanced Opportunities Grant in the Helena School District for grades 6-8. This grant is similar to the one for high school students but focuses on middle school. While the grant currently does not have state funding, the district anticipates that the legislature may fund it, and they want to have a pre-approved plan in place. The grant would support initiatives like career exploration, financial literacy, and career fairs, as well as enhance career preparation software and CTE programs for middle school students. If funded, it will provide valuable resources for these programs.

Mr. McKay addressed all questions proposed by the trustees regarding the action item *Approval of the Montana Advanced Opportunity Grant-Elementary District*.

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn commented, “At this point I would entertain a motion to approve the action item *Approval of the Montana Advanced Opportunity Grant-Elementary District*, as presented.”

**Motion:** Trustee Kay Satre moved to approve the action item *Approval of the Montana Advanced Opportunity Grant-Elementary District* as presented. Trustee Linda Cleatus seconded the motion.

**Public Comment:** None.

**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.)*

### 3. **Policy 2070: Network Information and Communication System Policy**

Ms. Barb Ridgway, Chief of Staff for Helena Public Schools, presented the action item *Policy 2070: Network Information and Communication System Policy* to the Board of Trustees. This policy has not been revised since 1997, and the updated language reflects the current reality that the district now has established networks, rather than being in the process of implementing them. Key changes to the policy include updated language on responsible online behavior and modifications to the previous statement regarding student access to equipment and networks. Originally, the policy stated that the district may withdraw student access to its network and the internet. However, this was revised, as it was noted that students can still access the internet via personal devices, such as phones. Additionally, the updated policy includes standard language concerning warranties and indemnification, clarifying that the district is not responsible for any lost or damaged information or unauthorized charges related to student devices. There have been no further changes since the policy was presented to the full Board of Trustees for information. Ms. Ridgway addressed all questions proposed by the trustees regarding the action item *Policy 2070: Network Information and Communication System Policy*.

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn commented, “At this point I would entertain a motion to approve *Policy 2070: Network Information and Communication System Policy*.”

**Motion:** Trustee Jennifer McKee moved to approve *Policy 2070: Network Information and Communication System Policy* as presented. Trustee Janet Armstrong seconded the motion.

**Public Comment:** None.

**Vote:** 8-0 motion carries unanimously.

4. **Policy 3150: Tobacco Free Schools-Repeal**

Ms. Barb Ridgway, Chief of Staff for Helena Public Schools, presented the action item *Policy 3150: Tobacco Free Schools* to the Board of Trustees. The Policy Committee is recommending the repeal of this policy as Policy 8225, which addresses similar issues, already covers much of the same content. There have been no further changes since the policy was presented to the full Board of Trustees for information. Ms. Ridgway addressed all questions proposed by the trustees regarding the action item *Policy 3150: Tobacco Free Schools*.

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn commented, “At this point I would entertain a motion to approve the repeal of *Policy 3150: Tobacco Free Schools*.”

**Motion:** Trustee Linda Cleatus moved to repeal *Policy 3150: Tobacco Free Schools*. Trustee Kay Satre seconded the motion.

**Public Comment:** None.

**Vote:** 8-0 motion carries unanimously.

5. **Policy 2170: Significant Writing-Repeal**

Ms. Barb Ridgway, Chief of Staff for Helena Public Schools, presented the action item *Policy 2170: Significant Writing* to the Board of Trustees. When the policy was initially developed in 2017, the Board of Trustees opted not to implement a significant writing program as outlined in the Administrative Rules of Montana (10.55.701). Given that the policy is no longer necessary, the Policy Committee is recommending its repeal. There have been no further changes since the policy was presented to the full Board of Trustees for information. Ms. Ridgway addressed all questions proposed by the trustees regarding the action item *Policy 2170: Significant Writing*.

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn commented, “At this point I would entertain a motion to approve the repeal of *Policy 2170: Significant Writing*.”

**Motion:** Trustee Jeff Hindoien moved to repeal *Policy 2170: Significant Writing*. Trustee Jennifer Walsh seconded the motion.

**Public Comment:** None.

**Vote:** 8-0 motion carries unanimously.

6. **Policy 3100: Publications and Distribution or Posting of Materials**

Ms. Barb Ridgway, Chief of Staff for Helena Public Schools, presented the action item *Policy 3100: Publications and Distribution or Posting of Materials* to the Board of Trustees. This policy has a minor change on line 43 noting that materials in schools must have prior approval from the Assistant

Superintendent. There have been no further changes since the policy was presented to the full Board of Trustees for information. Ms. Ridgway addressed all questions proposed by the trustees regarding the action item *Policy 3100: Publications and Distribution or Posting of Materials*.

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn commented, “At this point I would entertain a motion to approve *Policy 3100: Publications and Distribution or Posting of Materials*.”

**Motion:** Trustee Kay Satre moved to approve *Policy 3100: Publications and Distribution or Posting of Materials*. Trustee Jennifer McKee seconded the motion.

**Public Comment:** None.

**Vote:** 8-0 motion carries unanimously.

7. **Authorization of Trustees to Advocate for MTSBA’s Legislative Platform in the 2025 Legislature**

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn presented the action item *Authorization of Trustees to Advocate for MTSBA’s Legislative Platform in the 2025 Legislature* and addressed any questions regarding the action item.

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn commented, “At this point I would entertain a motion to approve the action item *Authorization of Trustees to Advocate for MTSBA’s Legislative Platform in the 2025 Legislature*.”

**Motion:** Trustee Jennifer McKee moved to approve the action item *Authorization of Trustees to Advocate for MTSBA’s Legislative Platform in the 2025 Legislature*. Trustee Janet Armstrong seconded the motion.

**Public Comment:** None.

**Vote:** 8-0 motion carries unanimously.

8. **Authorization of Superintendent and/or Authorized Designees to Advocate in the 2025 Legislature**

Superintendent Rex Weltz presented the action item *Authorization of Superintendent and/or Authorized Designees to Advocate in the 2025 Legislature* and addressed any questions regarding the action item.

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn commented, “At this point I would entertain a motion to approve the action item *Authorization of Superintendent and/or Authorized Designees to Advocate in the 2025 Legislature*.”

**Motion:** Trustee Linda Cleatus moved to approve the action item *Authorization of Superintendent and/or Authorized Designees to Advocate in the 2025 Legislature*. Trustee Kay Satre seconded the motion.

**Public Comment:** None.

**Vote:** 8-0 motion carries unanimously.

That concluded the Items for Action, and the Board of Trustees moved on review the Items for Information.

### **C. Items for Information**

#### **1. Policy 1075: Records Management and Access to Public Records**

Ms. Barb Ridgway, Chief of Staff, presented for information to the Board of Trustees *Policy 1075: Records Management and Access to Public Records*. After a thorough review of the policy, the committee determined that they would like to extend the general length of time allowed to respond to a public records request from 10 business days to 20 business days. Ms. Ridgway addressed questions the Board of Trustees had regarding *Policy 1075: Records Management and Access to Public Records*.

#### **2. Policy 2000: Student Instructional Goals**

Ms. Ridgway presented for information to the Board of Trustees *Policy 2000: Student Instructional Goals*. Following a thorough review of the policy, the committee determined that the category of gender identity, as required under Title IX, would be added on line 12. Ms. Ridgway addressed questions the Board of Trustees had regarding *Policy 2000: Student Instructional Goals*.

#### **3. Health Insurance Bill 332-John Doran**

Mr. John Doran, Chief Strategy Officer for the Montana Schools Insurance Alliance (MTSIA), presented information to the Board of Trustees regarding Health Insurance Bill 332 and MTSIA. Health Insurance Bill 332 allocates \$40 million in funding to establish the first public school health insurance trust, which must meet specific minimum requirements by June 30, 2026. These include participation from at least 150 districts, coverage for a minimum of 12,000 Employee Lives (distinct from member lives), a cap of 12% on annual administrative spending, an equitable distribution of assessment risk among members, and a five-year initial commitment with a subsequent five-year lockout period. Early exit from the trust is possible, contingent upon renewal and claims performance.

Mr. Doran provided an overview of the Montana Schools Insurance Alliance (MTSIA), which is the leading organization in the state working toward the approval of the first public school

health insurance trust. MTSIA is composed of key education partners, including MFPE, MQEC, MREA, MTSBA, MSBO, and SAM, along with employee benefit experts and school administrators. The alliance is collaborating with schools, teachers, the governor, the state auditor, legislators, carriers, and health vendors with the aim of retaining more funding within education, offering better and sustainable benefits, and doing so at the most competitive price possible in a transparent manner. MTSIA is designed with a profound understanding of the critical role education plays in Montana’s future. Mr. Doran presented a new model for schools to be introduced by MTSIA, which includes a proposed two-tier structure. He also outlined the program goals for MTSIA. Following the presentation, the Board of Trustees engaged in a thorough discussion regarding the information shared. Mr. Doran addressed several questions from the Board, particularly those related to Health Insurance Bill 332 and MTSIA.

The Board of Trustees moved on to hear reports.

## **D. REPORTS**

### **1. Student Representatives Report**

Mr. Charlie Snellman, Capital High School Student Representative for the Board of Trustees, gave his Student Representative Report. Mr. Snellman commented, “Good evening, Trustees, as we readjust to school routines after winter break and approach semester finals, students are enjoying the snow, or at least I am, and we are all eager to have a successful 2025. Though I do not have much to share today, Capital High students are still engaged in their communities, winning awards, and making the world a better place.

With semester testing beginning next week, parents were reminded that yesterday, January 13th, was the final Intervention Time (IT) opportunity of the semester. This structured time is crucial for students to complete makeup work, get academic assistance, or prepare for finals.

Thanks to the incredible generosity of our families and community, the Bruin Pantry provided food cards to 20 families for Thanksgiving and another 20 families for the holiday break. These efforts reflect the compassionate spirit of CHS and our commitment to supporting one another.

At the recent holiday assembly, CHS celebrated the talents of our students with a Talent Show. Congratulations to Charlie Snellman and Hollis Elliott, who earned first place with their exceptional performance and to all finalists who performed at the assembly.

Capital High is dedicated to preparing students for life after graduation. Below are two key events aimed at supporting students in their post-secondary plans:

- Scholarship Night:
  - Date: January 28<sup>th</sup>
  - Time: 6:00–8:00 PM
  - Location: CHS Library
  - This evening will provide information on scholarships, essay writing tips, the Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE), and GI Bill Education Benefits.

FAFSA assistance will also be available to ensure families meet the March 1 preferential deadline.

- Trades/Career Night:
  - Date: February 26<sup>th</sup>
  - Time: 6:00–8:00 PM
  - Location: CHS Auditorium and CTE Classrooms
  - All students and parents are invited to explore career opportunities. This event will include resources for job shadows and internships, helping students "test the waters" in various career paths.

As the semester concludes, CHS remains focused on academic achievement and fostering opportunities for every student to succeed. Thank you for your continued support, and we look forward to sharing updates from a fresh new semester in February.”

Mr. Snellman addressed questions the Board of Trustees had regarding his report.

Ms. Adella Harris, Helena High School Student Representative for the Board of Trustees, gave her Student Representative Report. Ms. Harris commented, “As Helena High jumps into the new year, January is full of exciting school events and honorable recognitions. The end of the first semester is fast approaching! Students and teachers are currently wrapping up their final units and preparing for the first round of semester testing. Tests will take place January 22-24 this year. We wish our students luck as they prepare for and sit for these exams. Mr. Kessler recently held a zoom call with Principal Watanabe from our sister school in Japan. There are exciting opportunities on the horizon for both schools that will include a virtual meet and greet with students. Mr. Watanabe is looking at planning a trip to Helena this spring to participate in our graduation ceremony. Finally, the Japanese Consulate will be in Montana later this month, hosting a community session at the Capitol. We have been asked to be present and be part of the discussions happening as we work to grow our connections with Japan.

The Montana High School Association has been visiting all 182-member high schools in the state over the past two years. The purpose of these visits is to observe the high school facilities across the state and chat with administrators about athletics in Montana. In recognizing the great success our two high schools have had; they chose Helena High and Capital High to be their last stop. It was great to have the MHSA staff in our building. Each member was invested in learning about what our school is working on and gaining our input on how we can help move high school athletics forward in the state.

Congratulations to our senior football players who were selected to represent HHS at this summer’s Shrine Game: Jaxan Lieberg, Cole Flugge, Trygve Braun and Dylan Mosness. Alternates that were selected include: Matt Marcille, Mac Lundstrom, Alex Swenson, Brady Swenson, and Carter Petre.

Quinn Guinyard was selected as an all-American cheerleader and performed in the Peral Harbor Parade in Waikiki this past month. Quinn is the first Helena cheerleader to be selected for and perform in this high-level event.



Eva Skibicki was awarded the Seal of Biliteracy from the Board of Public Education in the Spanish Language. Students who earn this seal must demonstrate their proficiency in the language and submit the evidence to the Board of Public Education to earn the award.

Thank you to our Student Council students for putting on an amazing Holiday Assembly! This group of students is working incredibly hard to help with our goal of building a positive culture in our school. It has been great to have the student voice in the decision-making process. The ideas that are brought forth are well developed; assisting in how we keep students in school and provide a positive experience for them.

Mrs. Koch has been doing an amazing job this year, preparing students for life in the culinary world. Besides the amazing food our students are producing under her instruction, she is also working hard to bring in professionals from the industry. This real-life experience that students gain is sparking interest and giving a glimpse into the culinary world outside of school.

As the feedback has made clear, the winter concerts were amazing! Some of the highlights include the HHS, CHS, CRA, and HMS choirs collaborating at the Capitol Rotunda for an amazing showcase of the talent we have in our schools. Our upper orchestra students also took advantage of that space and put on a concert that made it clear we have incredible musicians across our community. The small group ensembles that performed, showcased some of the best talent in the northwest region. Kudos to Mrs. Kohoutek, Mr. Hollow, and Mr. Cleary for the time they put in to prepare our students for these events!

Coming this Saturday, the student council will host our annual Winter Formal. January 18th, students will be welcomed to New York as they enter the Helena Civic Center dressed to dance.

On Monday January 27th the student council will also host our annual teacher breakfast. The breakfast takes place on the high school's in-service day after finals and serves as an encourager and act of thanks to our teachers as they work hard grading finals. The STUCO team has partnered with local Helena businesses to give out certificates, gift cards and goodies to teachers alongside their breakfast treats provided by our culinary students.

AA Band and Orchestra festivals are coming up over the next few months. AA Orchestra will take place February 3-4, while AA Band will fall on March 3-4. Our orchestras and bands have started preparations for these events, and we look forward to hearing about their experiences.

Our Thespian Troupe and Theater students are diligently preparing for the Thespian Festival at the end of the month. Our Troupe hopes to bring home honors again this year with their rendition of *The Taming of the Shrew*.

Helena High looks forward to an exciting new semester next month, full of every event, aspect, and pride that makes the Bengals the best to be!"

Ms. Harris addressed questions the Board of Trustees had regarding her report.

2. **Helena Education Association Report**

Ms. Jane Shawn, HEA President, gave the Helena Education Association Report. Ms. Shawn began by congratulating the newly certified National Board teachers and the recent Presidential Award winners, praising them as some of the best educators in the district. She then provided an update on the Helena Education Association (HEA), sharing that 71% of its members have transitioned from payroll deductions to bank deductions for union dues. This change is a proactive measure in response to anticipated state legislation that may end payroll deductions for public sector unions. Ms. Shawn also discussed a recent meeting with Trustee McKee regarding her proposal to expand arts programs in Helena's elementary schools. Although the initiative is still in the early planning stages, local art educators have expressed support for the idea, including potential artist residency programs. She announced that on February 17th, HEA will participate in the "Save Our Students" rally at the Capitol, where union members and supporters from across the state will gather. The Kalispell Education Association has challenged HEA to bring over 150 participants, and Ms. Shawn encouraged all board members to attend. Following the rally, union members will visit with legislators to discuss important educational issues. Ms. Shawn concluded her report by inviting any questions from the board.

3. **Facilities & Technology Committee Report**

Trustee Kay Satre gave the Facilities & Technology Committee Report. Trustee Satre shared information from the technology update that was given by Mr. Gary Myers, Director of Educational Technology. Mr. Myers reported that the district successfully handled a recent cyber threat, with no impact on systems due to timely patches. A discussion followed regarding the PowerSchool cybersecurity incident from December 7th, which was identified as a PowerSchool-specific issue, not related to the district's systems. This incident affected over 1,000 districts and approximately one million students nationwide. The district has prioritized continued communication with parents to ensure transparency and keep them informed. Additionally, the technology team has streamlined new employee onboarding processes and improved substitute teacher access to network devices. Mr. Myers emphasized his team's efficiency, noting that the average time to resolve a technical issue is just 1.1 hours, with 409 of 419 reported tickets successfully resolved.

Next, Trustee Satre shared information from the facilities update given by Mr. Todd Verrill, Facilities Director. Mr. Verrill shared an update on various ongoing projects, including the replacement of the Helena High School circulation pump motor and hallway work. The district is awaiting news on an EPA grant submission. Mr. Verrill also highlighted improvements at the Lincoln Center, including the remodeling of the main reception office and new carpet installation in the PD Center. Mr. Verrill is consulting with a Billings engineer to explore options for addressing the Helena High HVAC system, and preparations are underway for summer projects such as HVAC work, roof replacements, and auditorium lighting upgrades. In staffing news, the facilities department has made significant progress in filling vacancies and is now only two positions short. A new administrative assistant has been hired, and interviews are ongoing for a new Safety and Security Manager, with Mr. Verrill expressing optimism about the quality of candidates.

Trustee Satre concluded her report by acknowledging the valuable work of Mr. Neal Murray, who recently moved on from his position as the district's Safety and Security Manager. Trustee Satre addressed questions from the Board of Trustees regarding her report.

4. **Budget and Finance Committee Report**

The Budget and Finance Committee did not meet in January, however, Trustee Janet Armstrong wanted to provide an update on the current budget and finance situation. Trustee Armstrong highlighted that the district is facing a deficit, which is being subsidized by the interlocal fund. Trustee Armstrong mentioned that the district is awaiting potential funding, including anticipated state funding and a potential increase in funding from the state, but clarified that while these funds would help offset the deficit, they will not fully cover the shortfall. Additionally, without any salary increases or step/lane adjustments, the district would still face costs such as those related to compensation, leaving limited remaining funds. A significant concern is the rise in property liability insurance, which has led to increased costs this year. Trustee Armstrong emphasized the importance of considering local funding options, such as a technology levy, due to the growing demands for technology funding. Trustee Armstrong stressed that the district is operating with minimal financial breathing room and will need to explore additional funding opportunities to maintain and improve services. Trustee Armstrong addressed questions from the Board of Trustees regarding her update.

5. **Policy Committee Report**

Trustee Jennifer Walsh gave the Policy Committee Report. The Policy Committee spent significant time discussing records management, particularly evaluating the appropriate length of time for retaining records. After thorough discussion, the committee settled on a reasonable number, ensuring that all members were comfortable with the decision. Additionally, the committee reviewed the district's non-discrimination policies, focusing on ensuring that all relevant inclusionary terms were included. It was agreed to align the district's policies with federal definitions, such as Title IX, to ensure comprehensive coverage of non-discrimination, including gender identity. The committee also discussed the implementation of facility and therapy dogs within the district. Trustee Walsh shared that these certified therapy dogs have been helping students and supporting staff, which has been a positive development. Another topic of discussion was the Voluntary Employee Benefit Association (VEBA). The committee decided to revisit the issue, as there was insufficient information to make a final decision. The committee will await further details to make a well-informed decision at the next meeting. Trustee Walsh addressed questions the Board of Trustees had regarding her report.

6. **Teaching & Learning Committee Report**

Trustee Kay Satre gave the Teaching & Learning Committee Report. Trustee Satre provided an update on the Teaching and Learning Committee's meeting held on January 8th. Assistant Superintendent Josh McKay gave a comprehensive report on the OPI accreditation process, detailing how the district's elementary and high schools are meeting the required standards. The accreditation report, due to OPI at the end of February, serves as a reflection of last year's efforts and a preview of the work to be done in the current year. The district and all individual schools received the highest level of accreditation, "regular accreditation," which signifies outstanding performance. The report covers various areas, including strategic action plans, teacher load and class size, Indian Education For All, staff licensure, professional development, and the graduate profile. Mr. McKay also highlighted the graduate profile, which outlines the skills, attributes, and educational outcomes expected for all students. The

committee discussed ways to engage stakeholders and gather input on the graduate profile to better communicate the district's values and goals. Additionally, the committee reviewed a grant application to extend an advanced opportunity grant to cover middle school costs, which would help offset expenses related to materials and curriculum for Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. Trustee Satre addressed questions from the Board of Trustees regarding her report.

7. **Health Benefits Committee Report**

Trustee Kay Satre gave the Health Benefits Committee Report. Trustee Satre provided an update on the Health Benefits Committee's recent meetings, which took place on December 18th and January 17th. The committee's focus has been on the Request for Proposal (RFP) for the district's health insurance plan. The RFP was sent out recently, after a slight delay, and a letter of instruction was approved in the committee's latest meeting. The committee also discussed the timeline for submissions and the process for reviewing the proposals. The district's attorney joined the meeting to explain the scoring criteria for bids and to share survey tools that could help gauge member needs and preferences for coverage options. The committee emphasized the importance of working with the pharmacy benefit manager to explore options, such as a 340B option with Pure View or St. Peter's Health, which was previously unavailable through the current provider. The RFP process will involve a review of bids on January 30th, with several additional dates scheduled in February for further deliberation. Finalist interviews are planned for March, with the goal of making a recommendation to the full board in April, although the timeline may be adjusted if necessary. Additionally, the committee discussed the unbundling of bids for medical, vision, dental, and prescription benefits to secure the best possible deals. They aim to continue providing strong benefits while minimizing costs.

In response to concerns about the health plan's performance, Trustee Satre shared insights from Mr. Rich Franco, Human Resources Benefits Manager, who noted that while the plan's performance had been strong in previous years, rising premium costs and the impact of a small number of high-cost members have posed challenges. However, the plan remains stable with unreserves of approximately \$2.4 million, which is a significant improvement from the previous year. The committee is focused on improving the plan by seeking lower costs, more flexibility, and better member communication about benefits. They are also exploring the possibility of introducing high-deductible health plans with health savings accounts to offer additional options to members.

Trustee Satre addressed questions from the Board of Trustees regarding her report.

8. **Wellness Committee Report**

There was no Wellness Committee Report this evening.

9. **Montana School Boards Association Report**

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn gave the Montana School Boards Association (MTSBA) Report. Chair Hathhorn provided an update on the recent two-day MTSBA meeting, where key topics included budget discussions, strategic planning, and legislative priorities. One major

focus was the legislative platform aimed at recouping the inflation lost in recent years. However, it was noted that a decennial study is required before significant legislative changes can be made, and legislators are currently prioritizing gathering that data before proceeding with major reforms. The general mood among MTSBA members is optimistic, with increased energy around legislative efforts, particularly as new funding opportunities are being discussed. There is strong bipartisan support for educational issues, with both Democratic and Republican leaders working together on key initiatives. A significant portion of the meeting was dedicated to reviewing various proposed bills, including educational legislation. Chair Hathhorn emphasized the importance of monitoring these bills, especially the 283 educational bills currently under consideration, noting that many are likely to be dismissed or not heard. Chair Hathhorn also highlighted two education bills—one focused on inflation adjustments and the other proposing a stipend for board certification. Additionally, the meeting discussed changes to adult education levies and potential alterations to operational levy rules, which could have significant implications for districts that rely on these funds. The communication and advocacy efforts of various MTSBA members have been strong, with ongoing coordination between key stakeholders to ensure that education remains a priority in the legislative session.

Chair Hathhorn addressed questions from the Board of Trustees regarding her report.

10. **Parent Council Visit Reports**

There were no Parent Council Visit reports this evening.

That concluded the Reports portion of the agenda. The Board of Trustees moved on to review upcoming meetings.

## VII. UPCOMING MEETINGS

Board Chair Siobhan Hathhorn reviewed upcoming meetings with the Board of Trustees.

- Tuesday, January 28<sup>th</sup>, Board of Trustees Work Session, Four Georgians Elementary, 3:30 p.m.
- Tuesday, February 4<sup>th</sup>, Policy Committee Meeting, 12:00 p.m., Lincoln Center
- Wednesday, February 5<sup>th</sup>, Teaching and Learning Committee Meeting, 12:00 p.m., Lincoln Center
- Monday, February 10<sup>th</sup>, Facilities & Technology Committee Meeting, 12:00 p.m., Lincoln Center
- Tuesday, February 11<sup>th</sup>, Budget & Finance Committee Meeting, 12:00 p.m., Lincoln Center
- Tuesday, February 11<sup>th</sup>, Full Board Meeting, 5:30 p.m., Lincoln Center
- Tuesday, February 25<sup>th</sup>, Board of Trustees Work Session, Bryant Elementary, 3:30 p.m.

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

## **VIII. BOARD COMMENTS**

Assistant Superintendent Josh McKay informed the Board of Trustees that an invitation will be extended for their attendance at the Board of Public Education’s visit to our charter schools on January 24th. This visit is part of the ongoing charter school review process, during which members of the Board of Public Education will engage with staff and observe classroom environments.

There were no further board comments.

## **IX. ADJOURNMENT**

Board Chair Siobhan Hathorn adjourned the meeting at 9:37 p.m.

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Candice Delvaux, Recording Secretary      Date

# Helena Public Schools

## Sabbatical Recommendation

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### 2025-2026

#### **BACKGROUND:**

The New Professionalism Committee has met and reviewed applications for sabbatical leaves for the 2025-2026 school year. The committee recommends the approval of the following sabbaticals which are described briefly below.

Complete applications are on file at the Lincoln Center.

#### ***Katy Wright, Smith School Montessori Educator*** ***Spring Semester – 2025***

Katy proposes to navigate “The Great Loop”, a continuous waterway that recreational mariners can travel that includes part of the Atlantic, Gulf Intracoastal Waterways, the Great Lakes, Canadian Heritage Canals, and the inland rivers of America's heartland. Additionally, she plans to complete her doctoral research at the University of Wisconsin – River Falls which is a hybrid online/in-person program. Her goal is to earn the first ever Ed.D in Montessori studies. Finally, she will communicate with her students during her absence and plans to virtually mentor her replacement teacher as well.

#### ***Committee Recommendation:***

Approve Katy Wright’s sabbatical.

#### ***David Tuss, CHS Science Educator*** ***Spring Semester – 2025***

David’s sabbatical will allow him to work with the Forest Service Conservation Education Specialist, the MSU Math Science Resource Center and other conservation education organizations to formally organize a teaching resource to be shared with science educators. His goal is to create a product that focuses citizen-based science research and ultimately to create a teacher resource that results in deeper student understanding through engaging learning experiences.

#### ***Committee Recommendation:***

Approve David Tuss’ sabbatical.

**HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Board of Trustees Meeting**

**Meeting Date:** 2/11/2025

**Item VI.B.1.a.**

- Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance
- Review of Agenda
- Recognitions
- Superintendent's Report
- General Public Comment
- Consent Action Items
- Items For Action
- Items For Information
- Reports
- Upcoming Meetings
- Board Comments
- Adjournment

**Item Title:**     **Item For Action**  
                   1. Call for Annual Election  
                   a. Elementary Trustee Resolution Calling for the Annual Regular Election

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



# Board of Trustees Regular Meeting

Call For Annual Regular Election



## VI. NEW BUSINESS

### B. Items for Action

1. Call for Annual Election
  - a. Elementary Trustee Resolution Calling for the Annual Regular Election
  - b. High School Trustee Resolution Calling for the Annual Regular Election

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### Background:

The annual regular school election is held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in May, which is May 6<sup>th</sup> this year. Pursuant to 20-20-201, MCA, trustees must call for the election by resolution no later than 70 days before election day. Helena Public Schools entered into an agreement with the Lewis and Clark County Elections Office to conduct school elections for the district. The annual regular school election will be by mail ballot. The drop off location for ballots is at the Lewis and Clark County Elections Office located in the City-County Building. Voters will elect three trustees who reside within the elementary district boundaries to serve a three-year term. General fund mill levy approval for both the elementary and high school is also being requested at this time.

The District will also be requesting an increase in the technology mill levy for both the elementary and the high school districts for the purpose of purchasing, renting, repairing and maintaining technological equipment, including computers and computer network access, cloud computing services for technology infrastructure, platforms, software, network, storage, security, data, database, test environment curriculum, or desktop virtualization purposes, including any subscription or any license-based or pay-per-use service that is accessed over the internet or other remote network to meet the district's information technology and other needs, and the associated technical training for school district personnel. If approved, the increased levies will be for a term of 10 years and will take effect July 1, 2025, and expire June 30, 2035.

If it is later determined that any portion of the election is not required, that portion will be cancelled.

### Considerations:

- Neither the ability to run a general fund mill levy nor the amount of the levy will be known until after the spring enrollment count is finalized and the issuance of preliminary budget data sheets. However, due to the statutory requirement to call for the election no later than 70 days before the election, the recommendation is to include the general fund mill levy request in the resolution. If the Board later determines that the mill levy cannot be requested or is not desired, that portion of the election can be cancelled.
- The exact dollar amount of the technology fund levies has yet to be decided and therefore, the estimated tax impact cannot be calculated at this time.
- If the number of candidates filing a nomination petition or filing a declaration of intent to be a write-in candidate is equal to or less than the number of open trustee positions, the trustee election can be cancelled, and trustees may be seated by acclamation.
- The county elections office has requested that the exact language, including amounts, for any and all levies be transmitted to their office by March 28<sup>th</sup> so they may begin to prepare the ballot layout in the week leading up to the April 4<sup>th</sup> ballot certification deadline. Any portion of the election may still be cancelled up until the April 4<sup>th</sup> deadline.
- The cost of running an election can range (depending on the number of ballots and number voters) is approximately \$60,000-\$87,500.

### Superintendent recommendation:

Approve the attached resolution calling for the annual regular election.

## TRUSTEE RESOLUTION CALLING FOR THE ANNUAL REGULAR ELECTION

**BE IT RESOLVED**, the Board of Trustees for Helena Elementary School District No. 1, Lewis and Clark County, State of Montana, will hold the Annual Regular School Election by mail ballot on Tuesday, the 6th day of May, 2025, which date is not less than seventy (70) days after the passage of this resolution.

Voting will end at 8:00 p.m. on Election Day. The designated place of deposit will be located at:

The Lewis and Clark County Elections Office, City-County Building, 316 North Park Ave., Room 168, Helena, MT 59623, during regular business hours, Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and on Election Day, May 7, 2024, from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

The purpose of the election is to elect 3 (Three) trustees for three-year terms. Anyone interested in these positions must be qualified to vote and live within the Helena Elementary District boundary.

Approval of additional levies to operate and maintain the general fund for FY 2026 will also be requested.

In addition, the District will request approval of an increase in the annual technology fund levy for a term of 10 years for the purpose of purchasing, renting, repairing and maintaining technological equipment, including computers and computer network access, cloud computing services for technology infrastructure, platforms, software, network, storage, security, data, database, test environment curriculum, or desktop virtualization purposes, including any subscription or any license-based or pay-per-use service that is accessed over the internet or other remote network to meet the district's information technology and other needs, and the associated technical training for school district personnel.

If it is later determined that any portion of the election is not required, the Board of Trustees authorizes the Lewis and Clark County election administrator, Amy Reeves, to cancel that portion of the election in accordance with [13-1-304](#) and [20-3-313](#), MCA.

Three electors of this district who are qualified to vote at such election are hereby appointed to act as judges at the election as follows:

Election Judge	Address
1. Susan Russell,	530 Coventry Court, Helena, MT 59601
2. Judy Gardner,	1430 Brady St, Helena, MT 59601
3. Nancy Perry,	908 East Broadway St., Helena, MT 59601

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the clerk of this school district is hereby directed to notify the above named election judges of their appointment and to notify the county election administrator of the date of holding said election, and request the clerk to close regular registration and to prepare and furnish election materials as required by law. If any of these judges should not be able to serve, the election administrator will choose a replacement from certified judges.

No further proceedings were conducted relating to the election.

**TRUSTEE RESOLUTION CALLING FOR THE ANNUAL REGULAR ELECTION**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Siohban Hathhorn  
Print Name of Board Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Board Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
T. Janelle Mickelson  
Print Name of Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Clerk

DATED this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_.

**HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Board of Trustees Meeting**

**Meeting Date:** 2/11/2025

**Item VI.B.1.b.**

- Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance
- Review of Agenda
- Recognitions
- Superintendent's Report
- General Public Comment
- Consent Action Items
- Items For Action
- Items For Information
- Reports
- Upcoming Meetings
- Board Comments
- Adjournment

**Item Title:**     **Item For Action**  
                   1. Call for Annual Election  
                   b. High School Trustee Resolution Calling for the Annual Regular Election

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

**TRUSTEE RESOLUTION CALLING FOR THE ANNUAL REGULAR ELECTION**

**BE IT RESOLVED**, the Board of Trustees for Helena High School District No. 1, Lewis and Clark County, State of Montana, will hold the Annual Regular School Election by mail ballot on Tuesday, the 6th day of May, 2025, which date is not less than seventy (70) days after the passage of this resolution.

Voting will end at 8:00 p.m. on Election Day. The designated place of deposit will be located at:

The Lewis and Clark County Elections Office, City-County Building, 316 North Park Ave., Room 168, Helena, MT 59623, during regular business hours, Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and on Election Day, May 6, 2025, from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

The purpose of the election is to request approval of additional levies to operate and maintain the general fund for FY 2026.

In addition, the District will request approval of an increase in the annual technology fund levy for a term of 10 years for the purpose of purchasing, renting, repairing and maintaining technological equipment, including computers and computer network access, cloud computing services for technology infrastructure, platforms, software, network, storage, security, data, database, test environment curriculum, or desktop virtualization purposes, including any subscription or any license-based or pay-per-use service that is accessed over the internet or other remote network to meet the district’s information technology and other needs, and the associated technical training for school district personnel.

If it is later determined that any portion of the election is not required, the Board of Trustees authorizes the Lewis and Clark County election administrator, Amy Reeves, to cancel that portion of the election in accordance with [13-1-304](#) and [20-3-313](#), MCA.

Three electors of this district who are qualified to vote at such election are hereby appointed to act as judges at the election as follows:

- | Election Judge    | Address                                 |
|-------------------|---|
| 1. Susan Russell, | 530 Coventry Court, Helena, MT 59601    |
| 2. Judy Gardner,  | 1430 Brady St, Helena, MT 59601         |
| 3. Nancy Perry,   | 908 East Broadway St., Helena, MT 59601 |

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the clerk of this school district is hereby directed to notify the above named election judges of their appointment and to notify the county election administrator of the date of holding said election, and request the clerk to close regular registration and to prepare and furnish election materials as required by law. If any of these judges should not be able to serve, the election administrator will choose a replacement from certified judges.

No further proceedings were conducted relating to the election.

_____ Siobhan Hathhorn Print Name of Board Chair	_____ Signature of Board Chair
_____ T. Janelle Mickelson Print Name of Clerk	_____ Signature of Clerk

DATED this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_.

**HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Board of Trustees Meeting**

**Meeting Date:** 2/11/2025

**Item VI.B.2.**

- Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance
- Review of Agenda
- Recognitions
- Superintendent's Report
- General Public Comment
- Consent Action Items
- Items For Action
- Items For Information
- Reports
- Upcoming Meetings
- Board Comments
- Adjournment

**Item Title:**     **Item For Action**  
2. Capital High School Auditorium Stage Lighting Upgrade Project

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

**Todd J. Verrill**

Director of Facilities  
1201 Boulder Ave.  
Helena, MT 59601  
(406) 324-1734  
[tverrill@helenaschools.org](mailto:tverrill@helenaschools.org)

**Helena School District Board of Trustees**

1325 Poplar St.  
Helena, MT 59601-0939  
[boardoftrustees@helenaschools.org](mailto:boardoftrustees@helenaschools.org)

11 February 2025

**Dear Helena School District Board of Trustees,**

I respectfully request the board of trustees award the Capital High School Auditorium Stage Lighting Upgrade Project to Eagle Electric, Inc. The facilities office received bids from four contractors, and Eagle Electric, Inc. submitted the lowest proposal at \$141,100.00 (see attached Morrison-Maierle memo and bid tabulation worksheet). During the bid opening we did notice a variation in Eagle Electric's submission. They did not properly acknowledge an addendum to the original plan as specified in the project manual (i.e. "acknowledged addenda shall be attached to the bid form"). Eagle Electric did not follow these instructions but instead acknowledged on a sticker affixed to the mailing envelope. In consultation with our legal counsel, we determined this was a minor variation to the instructions and should not disqualify Eagle Electric's bid. By accepting this bid the district may face a protest from one of the other contractors; however, our legal counsel believes the decision is defensible because we have the right to waive informalities according to state administrative rules governing procurement of public contracts. I recommend the board accept the low bid and award to contract to Eagle Electric, Inc.

Sincerely,



Todd J. Verrill

Attachment: Memorandum dated: 29 January, Bid Summary

**BID SUMMARY  
JANUARY 29, 2025**

**CAPITAL HIGH SCHOOL  
AUDITORIUM STAGE LIGHTING UPGRADE**

Bids were received by the Helena School District for the Capital High School Auditorium Stage Lighting Upgrade project until 1:30 PM January 24, 2025. This memorandum summarizes information pertaining to bidding, the bids received and makes a recommendation on a course of action.

**ADVERTISEMENT / BIDDING PERIOD**

The project was advertised on two separate occasions in the Helena Independent Record, January 11, 2025, and January 18, 2025. Also, the project was advertised via the QuestCDN online construction data network and plans exchange, and was uploaded to [montanabid.com](http://montanabid.com), which posts the advertisement in all Montana plan exchanges.

The bidding period allowed 2 weeks for Contractors to prepare their bids. A non-mandatory pre-bid meeting was held at the Capital High School Auditorium on January 20, 2025, approximately 4 days prior to bid opening. This meeting was used to discuss the project plans, specifications, and requirements; electronic bidding process; and answer questions from Contractors. Six prime bidders attended the meeting: 406 Electric, Ascension Electric, Eagle Electric, Epic Electric, Tri County Mechanical and Electric, and Third Element.

One project addendum was issued during the bidding period. Addendum No. 1 was issued on January 20, 2025. This addendum included two revised plan sheets, the Pre-Bid Sign-In sheet, responses/clarifications based on questions asked by Contractors during the pre-bid meeting and cut sheets of the existing Type HL fixture.

**BIDS ANALYSIS**

Four bids were received at the Helena School District Facilities Office. All bids were received on the Bid Date and prior to the closing deadline. All of the bids contained a bid bond, which was a requirement of the contract documents.

Two of the bids, one received from Eagle Electric and the other by Ascension Electric are considered irregular based on Contract Documents, Section 00200, Article 13 – Preparation of Bid. Both bids contained only portions of the Bid Form and not the complete document. Ascension Electric provided a copy of the addendum, signed and dated, while Eagle Electric noted acknowledgement of the addendum on the outside of their bid envelope.

*We create solutions that build better communities.*



Bid Items 101 Mobilization/Demobilization, 102 Taxes, Bonds and Insurance, and 103 General Requirements were listed at a combined maximum of 17% of the total bid price. Contract Documents, Section 01 29 76 Measurement and Payment listed the maximum percentage as 3% for bid item 101, 4% for bid item 102, and 10% for bid item 103. All the bids received contained an overall combined percentage value less than 17%. Two bids, one by Ascension Electric and the second from Epic Electric, had the value in item 102 greater than 4% of the total bid price. Epic Electric's value was at 4.3% of the total bid price, and Ascension Electric's value was at 5.9% of the total bid price.

The following table summarizes total bid prices received. Attached to this memorandum is a certified bid tabulation that provides an item-by-item comparison between the bids received and the engineer's estimate of probable costs.

<b>Bidder</b>	<b>Total Base Bid Price</b>
Eagle Electric, Inc.	\$141,100.00*
Epic Electric, LLC	\$150,265.00^
Tri-County Mech. & Elect., LLC	\$158,902.00
Ascension Electric Corp.	\$166,267.00*^
<i>Engineer Estimate</i>	<i>\$150,000.00</i>

\* Denotes an irregular bid due to an incomplete Bid Form.

^ Denotes a bid received that exceeded the 4% limit of Bid Item 102.

The apparent low bidder, based on price is Eagle Electric, Inc. Their bid of \$141,100.00 was below the engineer's estimate. However, their bid is considered irregular due to not providing a complete bid form with their bid. The next lowest bidder is Epic Electric who provided a complete bid form in their bid and acknowledged the addendum per the Contract Document requirements, but exceeded the percentage value in bid item 102.

## **EVALUATION OF BIDDERS**

Eagle Electric, Inc is a licensed contractor in the State of Montana. The company has an office in Helena, Montana. The company has adequate equipment and resource to complete a job of this scale and nature.

Morrison-Maierle has worked with Eagle Electric on projects in the past. We have not seen any concerns with their abilities, capability or capacity to complete the Capital High School Auditorium Stage Lighting Upgrade project.

The second low bidder, Epic Electric, LLC is a licensed contractor in the State of Montana. The company has an office in East Helena, Montana. The company has adequate equipment and resource to complete a job of this scale and nature.

Morrison-Maierle has worked with Epic Electric LLC on projects in the past. We have not seen any concerns with their abilities, capability or capacity to complete the Capital High School Auditorium Stage Lighting Upgrade project.

### **CONCLUSION**

Contained within the Contract Documents, Section 00200, Article 19 – Evaluation of Bids and Award of Contract, Section 19.01, *OWNER also reserves the right to waive all informalities not involving price, time, or changes in the Work and to negotiate contract terms with the Successful Bidder.*

Based on the bids received the School District has the following options. The District could accept the irregular bid from Eagle Electric, Inc. or reject that bid and select Epic Electric, LLC, based on a complete bid. The bid remains subject to acceptance for a period of sixty (60) calendar days after the Bid opening.

**Prepared by Morrison-Maierle, Inc.**

Michael W. Brandt, PE  
Project Manager

Enclosures: Bid Tabulation

CAPITAL HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM STAGE LIGHTING UPGRADE  
HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT, HELENA, MT



BID TABULATION  
BID DATE: January 24, 2025

				Engineer's Estimate	Tri-County Mechanical & Electrical, LLC	Ascension Electric Corporation	Epic Electric LLC	Eagle Electric, Inc.
Item No.	Item Description	QTY	UNIT	Total Price	Total Price	Total Price	Total Price	Total Price
101	Mobilization – Demobilization	1	L.S.	\$4,500.00	\$1,369.00	\$1,000.00	\$3,671.00	\$4,170.00
102	Taxes, Bonds, and Insurance	1	L.S.	\$6,000.00	\$1,824.00	\$9,842.00	\$6,464.00	\$2,200.00
103	General Requirements	1	L.S.	\$15,000.00	\$4,561.00	\$3,000.00	\$3,078.00	\$13,890.00
104	Electrical Work	1	L.S.	\$55,500.00	\$37,856.00	\$48,625.00	\$24,432.00	\$21,923.00
105	Theatre Lighting Equipment	1	L.S.	\$69,000.00	\$113,292.00	\$103,800.00	\$112,620.00	\$98,917.00
	<b>Total Bid</b>			<b>\$150,000.00</b>	<b>\$158,902.00</b>	<b>\$166,267.00</b>	<b>\$150,265.00</b>	<b>\$141,100.00</b>

Michael W. Brandt, P.E.  
Morrison-Maierle

The Tabulation of Bids herein is believed to be a true representation of the Bids received on January 24, 2025. Any discrepancies in the indicated sum of any column of figures, as presented in the bids, and the correct sum thereof, have been resolved per Section 00 21

**HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Board of Trustees Meeting**

**Meeting Date:** 2/11/2025

**Item VI.B.3.**

- Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance
- Review of Agenda
- Recognitions
- Superintendent's Report
- General Public Comment
- Consent Action Items
- Items For Action
- Items For Information
- Reports
- Upcoming Meetings
- Board Comments
- Adjournment

**Item Title:**     **Item For Action**  
3. Calendar Committee Proposal for the 2025-2026 School Calendar

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



# Helena Public Schools

*A great place to learn*

Josh McKay  
Assistant Superintendent  
[jmckay@helenaschools.org](mailto:jmckay@helenaschools.org)  
Phone (406) 324-2004

Lincoln Center  
1325 Poplar St.  
Helena, Montana 59601  
Fax (406) 324-2022

Date: 2/5/2025

To: Helena School Board of Trustees  
From: Josh McKay, Assistant Superintendent  
Re: Recommended School Calendar for the 2025-2026 School Year

Board of Trustees,

For your consideration, enclosed in this packet is the recommended calendar from the Calendar Committee for the 2025-2026 school year. Members of the committee this year were: Thomas Baty, Jane Shawn, Gary Myers, Jonna Schwartz, Shannon Callahan, Leighann Wilson, Kathleen Prody, Chelsea Kingston, Justine Alberts, Brian Kessler, and Josh McKay.

This proposed calendar begins with students attending a 3-day first week, then a 4-day week (Labor Day), and then a 5-day week. Along with this startup routine, we included a weeklong spring break and a two weeklong Winter break. The Winter break is 2 weeks long, due to the location of January 1. Returning for a 2-day school week is not a preferred practice for learning. Other aspects of the calendar are like past calendars.

The committee has recommended maintaining a very similar calendar to the 2024-2025.

Our Calendar Committee is an enjoyable group of thoughtful participants. Together, we have rich discussions about our own ideas and the ideas shared with us from our partners throughout the district. We are continuing the committee work through the spring as we discuss ways to improve learner outcomes in combination with serving our community and continuing with our positive work atmosphere. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Josh McKay  
Assistant Superintendent  
Helena Public Schools  
(406) 324-2004



## Holiday and Student Dismissal Dates

August 25 & 26	Staff Orientation
August 27	First Day of School for Grs 1-5, Gr 6 CRA & HMS, Grs 9-12 PAL, Gr 9 CHS & HHS
August 28	First Day of School for Grs 7-8 CRA & HMS, Grs 10-12 CHS & HHS
September 1	Labor Day - No School - District Closed
September 2	First Day of School for Kindergarten
October 16 & 17	Educator Conferences-No School
November 3	2nd Quarter Begins: Grades 6-12
November 26-28	Thanksgiving Break-No School
November 27 & 28	District Closed
December 1	Trimester 2 Begins: Grades K-5
December 5	12:00 P.M. Grades K-5 Student Early Dismissal
December 5	Grades 6-12: Full Day of School
December 5	P.M. K-5 Staff Records Day
December 22 - Jan. 2	Winter Break-No School
December 24, 25 & January 1	District Closed
January 19	Martin Luther King Jr. Day-No School-District Closed
January 21, 22 & 23	High School Semester Testing
January 23	Grades K-5: Full Day of School
January 23	12:00 P.M. Grades 6-8 Early Dismissal
January 23	P.M. 6-8 Staff Records Day
January 26	No School K-12, HS Staff In-Service & Records Day
January 27	3rd Quarter Begins: Grades 6-12
February 16	Presidents' Day-No School-District Closed
March 16	Trimester 3 Begins: Grades K-5
March 30- April 3	Spring Break-No School
April 6	4th Quarter Begins: Grades 6-12
May 1	Vigilante Day - No School Grades 9-12/11:00 AM Dismissal K-8
May 25	Memorial Day-No School-District Closed
June 6	High School Graduation
June 8, 9	High School Semester Testing
June 9	Last Day & 12:00 p.m. Early Dismissal Students K-8
June 9	Last Day for Students 9-11
June 9	P.M. K-8 Staff Records Day
June 10	HS Staff In-Service-Records Day

### January 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

### February 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

### March 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

### April 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

### May 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

### June 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

### July 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

### August 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

### September 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

### October 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

### November 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

### December 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

**Mondays are Professional Release days for Helena School District staff. School for students will dismiss early. Please see below.**

- Elementary School Student day ends 45 minutes early
- Middle School Student day ends 45 minutes early
- High School Student day ends 45 minutes early

- First Day of School for Various Grade Levels
- Holiday or Break- No School-All Grades
- Staff Orientation
- Last Day of School 9-12 Students
- High School Semester Testing
- Early Dismissal Students K-5 ONLY/Halfday K-5 Records Day
- Early Dismissal Students 6-8/ Halfday 6-8 Records Day
- Early Dismissal K-8 Students Last Day / Halfday K-8 Rec. Day
- HS Staff In-Service-Records Day-No School K-12
- Vigilante Day-K-8 Released 11:00 AM / HS No School



**Policy Background  
Board of Trustees Meeting  
February 11, 2025**

**The following policies are being presented for Action:**

**1075 Records Management and Access to Public Records**

Extends the general length of time allowed to respond to a public records request from 10 business days to 20 business days.

**2000 Student Instructional Goals**

Added an additional category required under Title IX.

**The following policies are being presented for Information:**

**5000 Equal Employment Opportunity and Non-Discrimination**

Minor changes to clarify language. Added a required protected class.

**5050 State of Montana VEBA Health Benefit Plan**

The committee is recommending repeal of this policy. It hasn't acted on since 2016 and program requirements have changed. If there is a request to participate in VEBA an updated policy will be brought forward for approval.

**Policies Reviewed by the Policy Committee – No Changes**

**5090** Employee Electronic Services

**6000** District Organization: Superintendent and District Clerk

**7000** Fiscal and Business Management

**7007** Accounting Standards

**7010** Purchasing

**7030** Accounting and Audits

**HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Board of Trustees Meeting**

**Meeting Date:** 2/11/2025

**Item VI.B.4.**

- Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance
- Review of Agenda
- Recognitions
- Superintendent's Report
- General Public Comment
- Consent Action Items
- Items For Action
- Items For Information
- Reports
- Upcoming Meetings
- Board Comments
- Adjournment

**Item Title:**     **Item For Action**  
4. Policy 1075 Records Management and Access to Public Records

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



2  
3 SCHOOL DISTRICT ORGANIZATION

4  
5 Records Management and Access to Public Records

6  
7 The District is committed to effective records management including meeting legal standards for  
8 record retention and protection of privacy, optimizing the use of space, minimizing the cost of  
9 record retention, and properly destroying outdated records. This policy applies to all records,  
10 regardless of whether they are maintained in hard (paper) copy, electronically, or in some other  
11 fashion.

12  
13 The District requires that its records be maintained in a consistent and logical manner and be  
14 managed so that the District:

- 15
- 16 1. Meets legal standards for protection, storage and retrieval;
- 17 2. Protects the privacy of students and employees of the District;
- 18 3. Optimizes the use of space;
- 19 4. Minimizes the cost of record retention; and
- 20 5. Destroys outdated records in an appropriate manner.

21  
22 The Superintendent shall establish appropriate records management procedures and practices,  
23 which shall be provided to staff members who manage records within the District. The Board  
24 acknowledges the importance of public records as the record of the acts of the District and the  
25 repository of information about the District. The Board acknowledges the public’s right to  
26 inspect and copy the District’s public records, with certain exceptions. Unless otherwise  
27 provided by law, a public record shall be accessible for inspection and duplication either by  
28 written or oral request. The District shall respond to all such requests within a reasonable period  
29 of time, generally not to exceed ~~40~~ 20 business days. If the District cannot respond to the request  
30 within ~~40~~ 20 business days, the records custodian shall notify the requestor in writing and  
31 provide a timeline for response to the request. If an oral request is not responded to within ~~40~~ 20  
32 business days, the requestor must put the request in writing.

33  
34 The Superintendent shall establish procedures for storage of and access to essential records. The  
35 Superintendent shall designate essential records which are immediately necessary to:

- 36 • Respond to an emergency or disaster;
- 37 • Begin recovery or reestablishment of operations during and after an emergency or
- 38 disaster;
- 39 • Protect the health, safety, and property of District students and employees;
- 40 or
- 41 • Protect the assets, obligations, rights, history and resources of the District, its employees,
- 42 and students.

43  
44 The District will provide copies of all documents, including electronic communications, in the  
45 medium in which those documents exist.

- 47 Reasonable fees may be charged for copies and for time spent researching a request and  
 48 reproducing materials as follows:
- 49 • actual costs directly related to fulfilling a records request including but not limited to the  
 50 time required to gather, redact, scan, copy, or otherwise and reproduce the requested  
 51 information; and
  - 52 • actual cost of purchasing the electronic media used for transferring data, if the person  
 53 requesting the information does not provide the media;
  - 54 • copies of Board minutes at .15¢ per page;
  - 55 • copies of other materials at .25¢ per page;
  - 56 • no charge for copies emailed to requestor;
  - 57 • actual postage for any copies mailed.

58  
 59 The District shall comply with Montana law in addressing any unauthorized breaches of its  
 60 computer data security system, including but not limited to complying with all disclosure and  
 61 investigative requirements.

62		
63	Legal References:	§ 20-3-324, MCA Powers and duties
64		§ 20-3-323, MCA District policy and record of acts
65		§ 2-6-1001 <i>et al</i> , MCA Public Records
66		§ 30-14-1704, MCA Computer Security Breach
67		House Bill 123 Public Records Laws
68		

69  
 70 Cross Reference:

71  
 72  
 73 Policy History:

74 Adopted on: 2.8. 2011  
 75 Revised on: 1.12.2016, 2.14.2017

76

**HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Board of Trustees Meeting**

**Meeting Date:** 2/11/2025

**Item VI.B.5.**

- Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance
- Review of Agenda
- Recognitions
- Superintendent's Report
- General Public Comment
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- Items For Action
- Items For Information
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**Item Title:**     **Item For Action**  
5. Policy 2000 Student Instructional Goals

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

2  
3 STUDENT INSTRUCTION

4  
5 STUDENT INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

6  
7 The District will provide equal opportunity for students to receive an education which will  
8 enable them to fulfill their role in society, commensurate with individual ability, in compliance  
9 with legal requirements, and reflecting the desires of the people.

10  
11 Instructional programs, methods, and resources should meet the needs of each student, regardless  
12 of race, color, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or level of ability. The District  
13 recognizes that equal opportunity education does not imply uniformity and that each student’s  
14 unique characteristics must be acknowledged. Instructional programs, methods, and materials  
15 will not imply, teach, or encourage any beliefs or practices reflecting bias or discrimination  
16 toward other individuals or groups and will not deny others their basic human rights.

17  
18 The District has developed curriculum learner goals that are available through District and  
19 School Offices. These goals reflect the District’s ongoing strategic educational plan and will be  
20 publicized and made available to interested citizens. This statement will be reviewed annually  
21 and revised as deemed necessary.

22  
23 Legal References: § 20-1-102, MCA Legislative goals for public elementary and  
24 secondary schools.  
25 10.55.701, ARM Board of Trustees  
26

27 Cross References:

28  
29  
30 Policy History:

31 Adopted on: 1.14.2014  
32 Revised on:  
33 Reviewed on:  
34  
35  
36  
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41

**Policy Background  
Board of Trustees Meeting  
February 11, 2025**

**The following policies are being presented for Action:**

**1075 Records Management and Access to Public Records**

Extends the general length of time allowed to respond to a public records request from 10 business days to 20 business days.

**2000 Student Instructional Goals**

Added an additional category required under Title IX.

**The following policies are being presented for Information:**

**5000 Equal Employment Opportunity and Non-Discrimination**

Minor changes to clarify language. Added a required protected class.

**5050 State of Montana VEBA Health Benefit Plan**

The committee is recommending repeal of this policy. It hasn't acted on since 2016 and program requirements have changed. If there is a request to participate in VEBA an updated policy will be brought forward for approval.

**Policies Reviewed by the Policy Committee – No Changes**

**5090** Employee Electronic Services

**6000** District Organization: Superintendent and District Clerk

**7000** Fiscal and Business Management

**7007** Accounting Standards

**7010** Purchasing

**7030** Accounting and Audits

**HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Board of Trustees Meeting**

**Meeting Date:** 2/11/2025

**Item VI.C.1.**

Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance

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**Item Title:**     **Items For Information**  
1. Policy 5000 Equal Employment Opportunity and Non-Discrimination

2  
3 PERSONNEL

4  
5 Equal Employment Opportunity and Non-Discrimination

6  
7 As required by federal law, including but not limited to the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX,  
8 and Section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act and their regulations the District will  
9 provide equal employment opportunities ~~and will not discriminate in its educational programs or~~  
10 ~~activities, including in the area of employment,~~ with respect to all persons, regardless of their  
11 race, color, religion, creed, national origin, sex, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity,  
12 genetic information and expression, ancestry, marital status, military status, citizenship status,  
13 culture, social origin or condition, use of lawful products while not at work, political affiliation  
14 or a mental, physical or sensory disability, or by any other distinguishing characteristic if  
15 otherwise able to perform essential functions of a job with reasonable accommodations, and  
16 other legally protected categories

17  
18 The District shall not retaliate against any employee for complaining about not receiving equal  
19 employment opportunities or other unlawful discriminatory practices, participating in a  
20 proceeding regarding the denial of equal employment opportunities, or otherwise opposing  
21 discrimination.

22  
23 The District will make reasonable accommodation for an individual with a disability known to  
24 the District, if the individual is otherwise qualified for the position, unless the accommodation  
25 would impose undue hardship on the District. Covid-19 vaccine status will not be used as a basis  
26 to deny or allow equal opportunity to employment.

27  
28 Persons who believe they have not received equal employment opportunities or have been  
29 retaliated against should report their claims to the building principal or department supervisor.  
30 Inquiries regarding sex discrimination or sexual harassment may also be directed to the District’s  
31 Title IX Coordinator, the Assistant Secretary for the U.S. Department of Education, or both.  
32 Claims of sexual harassment will be handled through the District’s Title IX Sexual Harassment  
33 Grievance Procedures. Claims of disability discrimination will be handled through the District’s  
34 Section 504 and ADA Grievance Procedure. All other claims will be handled through the  
35 Uniform Complaint Procedure.

36  
37 No employee or applicant will be discriminated against for initiating a complaint, serving as a  
38 witness, supplying information or otherwise participating in an investigation or proceeding  
39 involving an alleged violation of this policy or State or federal laws. The District reserves the  
40 right to take action against any individual who knowingly makes false accusations or knowingly  
41 provides false information.

42  
43 Retaliation against an employee who has filed a discrimination complaint, testified or  
44 participated in any manner in a discrimination investigation or proceeding is prohibited.

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- Cross References: [Policy 5015 Bullying/Harassment/Intimidation Prevention Reporting](#)  
[Policy 1085 Uniform Complaint Procedure](#)  
Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedure  
Section 504 and ADA Grievance Procedure
- Legal References: [29 U.S.C. §§ 621, et seq. Age Discrimination in Employment Act](#)  
[42 U.S.C. §§ 12111, et seq. Americans with Disabilities Act, Title I](#)  
[29 U.S.C. § 206\(d\) Equal Pay Act](#)  
[8 U.S.C. §§ 1324\(a\), et seq. Immigration Reform and Control Act](#)  
[29 U.S.C. §§ 791, et seq Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#)  
[20 U.S.C. §§ 1681, et seq.; Title IX of the Education Amendments](#)  
[34 C.F.R. Part 106 Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in Education](#)  
[Montana Constitution, Art. X, § 1 - Educational goals and duties](#)  
[§ 49-2-101, et seq. MCA Human Rights Act](#)  
[§ 49-2-301, MCA Retaliation Prohibited](#)  
[§ 49-1-102, MCA Freedom from discrimination](#)  
[§ 49-2-303, MCA Discrimination in employment](#)  
[§ 49-3-201, MCA et seq Governmental Code of Fair Practices](#)
- [§ 49-2-101, et seq., MCA Human Rights Act](#)  
[§ 49-2-312 Discrimination Based on Vaccine Status or Immunity Passport Prohibited](#)  
[§ 50-16-502, MCA Legislative findings \(Cited by House Bill 702\)](#)  
*Bostock v. Clayton County*, 140 S. Ct. 1731 (2020)
- Policy History:  
Adopted on: 8.13.2013  
Revised on: 11.10.2020, 11.9.2021, 2.13.2024



HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Board of Trustees Meeting

Item VI.C.2.

**Meeting Date:** 2/11/2025

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**Item Title:**     **Items For Information**  
2. Policy 5050 State of Montana VEBA Health Benefit Plan

2  
3 PERSONNEL

4  
5 Montana VEBA (Voluntary Employee Beneficiary Association) Health Benefit Plan

6  
7 The Helena School District #1 is eligible for participation in the State of Montana VEBA  
8 Health Benefit Plan and Trust (“the Plan”) which was adopted by the Board of Trustees on  
9 December 8, 2015, by acceptance of a completed Employer Adoption Agreement by the  
10 State of Montana Department of Administration.

11  
12 This policy will be in effect for the following group as defined below.

13  
14 ~~———— Classified/Non-Certified employees who are members of the Montana~~  
15 ~~Public Employees Retirement System (MPERS) and eligible for retirement~~  
16 ~~from MPERS, i.e. at least 50 years old with 5 years vested in MPERS, or~~  
17 ~~members of the district “Administrative and Independent Group” with~~  
18 ~~management of at least 2 employees. Contributions made on behalf of the~~  
19 ~~employee by the District shall be applied uniformly to all eligible~~  
20 ~~employees and such contributions shall be made on behalf of all eligible~~  
21 ~~employees. This policy requires that all employees separating from service~~  
22 ~~in such group while this policy is in effect shall be required to contribute the~~  
23 ~~value of a quarter of their accumulated sick leave, and the value of any~~  
24 ~~other periodic employer provided retirement benefit for this group that may~~  
25 ~~be approved by the Board of Trustees for Helena School District No. 1.~~

26  
27  
28  
29 Policy History

30 Adopted On: ~~————~~ 3.8.2016

31 Revised On: ~~—~~

HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Board of Trustees Meeting

Item VI.D.1-10.

**Meeting Date:** 2/11/2025

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**Item Title:** Reports

HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Board of Trustees Meeting

Item VII.

**Meeting Date:** 2/11/2025

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**Item Title:** Upcoming Meetings

HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Board of Trustees Meeting

Item VIII.

**Meeting Date:** 2/11/2025

Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance

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**Item Title: Board Comments**

HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Board of Trustees Meeting

Item IX.

**Meeting Date:** 2/11/2025

Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance

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Adjournment

**Item Title:** Adjournment