



Superintendent
Rex Weltz
406-324-2000

Business Manager
Janelle Mickelson
406-324-2007

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING**

Lincoln Center - 1325 Poplar Street. February 4, 2025. Noon – 1:00 p.m.

I. INTRODUCTIONS

II. REVIEW OF AGENDA

III. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

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

IV. REVIEW JANUARY 7, 2025, BOARD POLICY MEETING MINUTES

V. POLICIES FOR SECOND READING -HAVE GONE FOR FULL BOARD 1ST READING

- A. 1075 Records Management and Access to Public Records
- B. 2000 Student Instructional Goals

VI. POLICIES FOR SECOND READING -RETURNING TO COMMITTEE FOR 2ND READING

- A. 5000 Equal Employment Opportunity and Non-Discrimination
- B. 5050 State of Montana VEBA Health Benefit Plan
 - 1. Background: Montana Voluntary Employees' Beneficiary Association Health Reimbursement Account
- C. 5055 Leave of Absence
- D. 5085 Substitutes and Student Teachers / Interns

VII. PRESENTATION OF POLICIES FOR PERIODIC REVIEW:

- A. 5090 Employee Electronic Services
- B. 6000 District Organization Superintendent and District Clerk
- C. 7000 Fiscal and Business Management
- D. 7007 Accounting Standards
- E. 7010 Purchasing
- F. 7030 Accounting and Audits

Next Meeting
March 4, 2025 at noon
Lincoln Center Board Room

VIII. SUPERINTENDENT OR BOARD COMMENTS

IX. ADJOURNMENT



The Helena Public Schools educate, engage, and empower each student to maximize his or her individual potential with the knowledge, skills and character essential to being a responsible citizen and life-long learner.

Board of Trustees Policy Committee Meeting

Tuesday, January 7th, 2025
12:00 p.m.
Lincoln Center
1325 Poplar St., Helena, MT 59601
And via
TEAMS

MINUTES

Attendees

<i>Committee:</i>	<i>Others:</i>
Jennifer Walsh, Committee Chair	Josh McKay, Assistant Superintendent
Linda Cleatus, Trustee	Barb Ridgway, Chief of Staff
Janet Armstrong, Trustee	Todd Verrill, Facilities Director
	Jane Shawn, HEA President
	Rex Wertz, Superintendent
	Lona Carter, Student Health Services & Special Education Director
	Candice Delvaux, Executive Assistant
	Gary Myers, Director of Educational Technology
	Keri Mizell, Human Resources Director
	Karen Ogden, Communications Officer
	Janelle Mickelson, Business Director
	Tim McMahon, Activities Director
	Bea Kaleva, District Legal Counsel
	Kaitlyn Hess, Data & Federal Programs Director

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 12:02 p.m. by Policy Committee Chair, Trustee Jennifer Walsh. Following the call-to-order, members of the Policy Committee and other attendees introduced themselves.

II. REVIEW OF AGENDA

No changes were requested to the agenda.

III. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no general public comment.

IV. REVIEW OF THE 12.3.2024 POLICY COMMITTEE MINUTES

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

V. POLICIES FOR SECOND READING

A. Policy 2070: Network Information and Communication System Policy

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 2070: Network Information and Communication System Policy*. This policy was previously presented to the Board of Trustees for its first reading, during which no recommended changes were proposed. The Policy Committee determined that *Policy 2070: Network Information and Communication System Policy* will be presented to the Board of Trustees for action at the upcoming full board meeting.

B. Policy 3150: Tobacco Free Schools-Redundant/Repeal

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 3150: Tobacco Free Schools*. This policy was previously presented to the Board of Trustees for its first reading, during which no recommended changes were proposed. The Policy Committee is recommending the repeal of *Policy 3150*, as *Policy 8225*, which addresses similar issues, already covers much of the same content. The Policy Committee determined that *Policy 3150: Tobacco Free Schools* will be presented to the Board of Trustees for action with a recommendation to repeal the policy at the upcoming full board meeting.

C. Policy 2170: Significant Writing/Repeal

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 2170: Significant Writing*. This policy was previously presented to the Board of Trustees for its first reading, during which no recommended changes were proposed. Given that the policy is no longer necessary, the Policy Committee determined that *Policy 2170: Significant Writing* will be presented to the Board of Trustees for action with a recommendation to repeal the policy at the upcoming full board meeting.

D. Policy 2333: Participation in Commencement Exercises

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 2333: Participation in Commencement Exercises*. After further consultation with the principals regarding the policy, the consensus among the principals was that language concerning the graduation status of exchange students was unnecessary for inclusion in the policy. Instead, it was agreed that the relevant information would be addressed in the handbooks, which would provide principals with greater flexibility in extenuating circumstances. The Policy Committee noted that the policy has been reviewed, with no changes deemed necessary.

E. Policy 3100: Publications and Distribution or Posting of Materials

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 3100: Publications and Distribution or Posting of Materials*. This policy has a minor change on line 43 noting that materials in schools must have prior approval from the Assistant Superintendent and has been before the full Board of Trustees for its first reading. The Policy Committee determined that *Policy 3100: Publications and Distribution or Posting of Materials* will be presented to the Board of Trustees for action at the upcoming full board meeting.

VI. PRESENTATION OF POLICIES FOR PERIODIC REVIEW

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

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 1075: Records Management and Access to Public Records*. After a robust discussion, 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. The Policy Committee determined that *Policy 1075: Records Management and Access to Public Records* will be presented to the Board of Trustees for information at the upcoming full board meeting.

B. Policy 2000: Student Instructional Goals

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 2000: Student Instructional Goals*. After a robust discussion the committee determined they would add the category of gender identity required under Title IX on line 12. The Policy Committee determined that *Policy*

2000: Student Instructional Goals will be presented to the Board of Trustees for information at the upcoming full board meeting.

C. Policy 3000: Equal Educational Opportunities

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 3000: Equal Educational Opportunities*. No changes were made to the policy, and the committee noted it as reviewed.

D. Policy 3005: Bullying, Intimidation, Harassment & Hazing Prevention and Reporting

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 3005: Bullying, Intimidation, Harassment & Hazing Prevention and Reporting*. After reviewing the policy the committee determined that the words *sensory handicap* on line 20 would be replaced with the word *disability*. The Policy Committee acknowledged the policy as having been reviewed.

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

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 5000: Equal Employment Opportunity and Non-Discrimination*. No changes were made to the policy, and the committee acknowledged it as reviewed.

F. Policy 5015: Bullying, Intimidation, Harassment & Hazing Prevention and Reporting

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 5015: Bullying, Intimidation, Harassment & Hazing Prevention and Reporting*. After reviewing the policy the committee determined that the words *sensory handicap* on line 13 would be replaced with the word *disability*. The Policy Committee acknowledged the policy as having been reviewed.

G. Policy 4036: Facility/Therapy Dogs Policy

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 4036: Facility/Therapy Dogs Policy*. No changes were made to the policy, and the committee acknowledged it as reviewed.

H. Policy 4050: School Resource Officer Program

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 4050: School Resource Officer Program*. Ms. Ridgway pointed out that the language on lines 24 and 25 should not be underlined, and she will make the necessary correction. Trustee Janet Armstrong suggested that it would be beneficial for the Board of Trustees to have a comprehensive list outlining the items they are required to review on an annual basis. The Policy Committee acknowledged the policy as having been reviewed.

I. **Policy 5050: State of Montana VEBA Health Benefit Plan**

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 5050: State of Montana VEBA Health Benefit Plan*. After a thorough discussion of the policy, the committee requested further information regarding VEBA. Ms. Ridgway confirmed that she would provide this information at a future Policy Committee meeting, at which time the policy will be revisited for further review.

J. **Policy 5055: Leave of Absence**

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 5055: Leave of Absence*. After a thorough examination of the policy, the committee addressed concerns regarding bereavement leave for classified employees not covered by a collective bargaining agreement. It was noted that the language may require revision to ensure compliance with Montana law. The Policy Committee agreed to revisit *Policy 5055: Leave of Absence* at a future meeting for further review and discussion, with a focus on the bereavement leave provisions.

K. **Policy 5060: Holidays**

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 5060: Holidays*. No changes were made to the policy, and the committee acknowledged it as reviewed.

L. **Policy 5085: Substitutes and Student Teachers / Interns**

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 5085: Substitutes and Student Teachers / Interns*. The committee engaged in a thorough discussion regarding the language on lines 16 through 18, concluding that the wording requires further review and adjustment to ensure alignment with the collective bargaining agreement. The policy will be brought back to the committee for further review at a future meeting.

M. **Policy 5090: Employee Electronic Services**

The Policy Committee was unable to complete the review of *Policy 5090: Employee Electronic Services* due to time constraints and determined the policy would be reviewed at a future meeting.

N. **Policy 6000: District Organization Superintendent and District Clerk**

The Policy Committee was unable to complete the review of *Policy 6000: District Organization Superintendent and District Clerk* due to time constraints and determined the policy would be reviewed at a future meeting.

VII. SUPERINTENDENT OR BOARD COMMENTS

There were no further comments.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Jennifer Walsh adjourned the meeting at 1:00 p.m.

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
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 70 Cross Reference:

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 72
 73 Policy History:

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

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3 STUDENT INSTRUCTION

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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

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27 Cross References:

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30 Policy History:

31 Adopted on: 1.14.2014
32 Revised on:
33 Reviewed on:

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3 PERSONNEL

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5 Equal Employment Opportunity and Non-Discrimination

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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 and expression, ancestry, marital status, military status, citizenship status, culture, social origin
13 or condition, use of lawful products while not at work, political affiliation or a mental, physical
14 or sensory disability, or by any other distinguishing characteristic if otherwise able to perform
15 essential functions of a job with reasonable accommodations, and other legally protected
16 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.

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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

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3 **PERSONNEL**

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

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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.
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29 Policy History

30 Adopted On: 3.8.2016

31 Revised On:

Montana Voluntary Employees' Beneficiary Association Health Reimbursement Account

ABOUT MT VEBA HRA

The Montana Voluntary Employees' Beneficiary Association Health Reimbursement Account (the Montana VEBA HRA) is a post-employment medical expense reimbursement program.

The Department of Administration (DOA) has an IRS determination of the tax-exempt status of the Montana VEBA HRA under IRC 501(c)(9) since July 2003.

IRS requirements for the Montana VEBA HRA include the group participation of eligible employees in a work unit. The IRS rulings prohibits an employee from making the individual choice to participate in (or not participate in) a Montana VEBA HRA group. An employee cannot choose between non-taxable benefits (employer contribution of accrued leave to the Montana VEBA HRA) or the cashing out of accrued leave at termination of employment.

The following guidelines are designed to help employers and employees establish groups for the Montana VEBA HRA:

- A group is an association of employees employed by the same employer under an existing organizational structure. Groups may also be formed from smaller sub-units, such as a recognized organizational division of the employer. Sub-units may be determined by geographical location of a work unit, job positions, or another reasonable classification of employees.
- A group must have at least 5 eligible employees. The most common type of group formation will be those employees who are eligible to retire and voting on a contribution of 25% of accrued sick-leave, or 25% of accrued sick-leave and 100% of accrued annual-leave at termination of employment.
- Groups may also be formed from all employees at the termination of employment, as long as those employees are eligible to receive a payout of accrued sick-leave or a payout of accrued sick-leave and annual-leave at termination of employment, regardless of age or years of service.

ELIGIBLE TO RETIRE

Employee must be eligible to retire and pay into a public retirement program. A participating employer may request a list of employees eligible to retire based on criteria for years of service and age for the employer at the Health Care and Benefits Division. Public retirement programs include, (PERS, Game Wardens, Sheriff, Police, Fire, Judges, and Correctional Officers)

Employee must be:

- Active in PERS or other public retirement program
- Eligible for benefits from the employer
- Receive the employer share (employer contribution for benefits)

TERMINATION FROM EMPLOYMENT

Eligibility/criteria - The group should have a department ID or other organizational boundary. The employee must terminate from employment with the employer. If the employee transfers to another state agency within state government, or to another public employer (i.e., a city or county), the employee's eligibility for the Montana VEBA HRA will be based on the new position and if it is Montana VEBA HRA eligible job position.

Employee must be:

- Active in PERS or other public retirement program
- Eligible for benefits from the employer
- Receiving the employer share (employer contribution for benefits)

NOTE: A group may be all union members, or a combination of union and non-union employees (blended). HCBDB recommends that employers proactively contact the union when a group of employees elects to form a group, obtain written agreement with the union to form a blended group, and advise the union of the vote results.

Employee participation in a group after the group has been established, may occur in the following ways:

1. Employee becomes eligible to be a group member if the employee is hired into a Montana VEBA HRA eligible job position in an existing group
2. Employee becomes eligible to retire (meets criteria for public retirement program based on years of service and age) while in a Montana VEBA HRA eligible job position during the period that the group is in effect
3. If the employee takes a new Montana VEBA HRA eligible job position in a different group for the same employer and meets eligibility criteria to become a member of that new group

If the employee takes a new job position that is not a Montana VEBA HRA eligible position or the employee does not meet the individual eligibility criteria to become a group member within an existing group (e.g., not eligible to retire), the employee will not be a Montana VEBA HRA group member in the new job position.

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3 PERSONNEL

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5 Leave of Absence

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7 The District provides leave to its employees pursuant to Montana law, collective bargaining
8 agreements and individual contracts. Those employees in paid leave status continue to accrue
9 seniority and are eligible for District benefits. Employees in unpaid leave status do not accrue
10 seniority and may not be eligible for benefits through the District.

11
12 *Sick Leave*

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14 Certified employees will be granted sick leave according to terms of their collective bargaining
15 agreement. Administrators shall be granted sick leave pursuant to the terms of their individual
16 contracts. Classified employees shall be granted sick leave pursuant to Montana law governing
17 public employees. Unless otherwise stated by contract, “sick leave” means a leave of absence,
18 with pay, for an illness suffered by an employee or his or her immediate family. “Immediate
19 family” means the employee’s spouse, domestic partner, parents, siblings, children and like
20 relations of the spouse or domestic partner. A maximum of ten (10) days of accumulated sick
21 leave may be used per year because of death in the immediate family

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23 If the District has established, either through collective bargaining or through policy, a sick leave
24 fund, employees may contribute any portion of the employee's accumulated sick leave or
25 accumulated vacation leave to a nonrefundable sick leave fund and become eligible to draw upon
26 the fund pursuant to the rules established for the fund.

27
28 *Bereavement Leave*

29 Employees covered by a collective bargaining agreement will be granted bereavement leave
30 according to the terms of their collective bargaining agreement. Other employees shall be
31 allowed up to five (5) days of bereavement leave for deaths in the immediate family (employee’s
32 spouse, domestic partner, parents, siblings, children, grandparent, grandchild and like relations of
33 the spouse or domestic partner). In the event the employee needs additional bereavement time,
34 an additional leave of up to five (5) days may be awarded at the discretion of their immediate
35 supervisor. One (1) day of bereavement leave may be granted to allow an employee to attend a
36 funeral of a family member who does not meet the criteria of “immediate family”. Any leave
37 categorized as bereavement leave shall be without loss of pay.

38
39 *Personal and Emergency Leave*

40
41 Certified employees will be granted personal and emergency leave according to the terms of their
42 collective bargaining agreement. Administrators will be granted personal and emergency leave
43 pursuant to the terms of their individual contracts, or at the discretion of the
44 Superintendent. Classified staff may be granted personal and emergency leave pursuant to the
45 terms and conditions stated in their collective bargaining agreement or current classified staff

46 handbook. Personal and emergency leave is without pay unless otherwise stated in the
47 applicable collective bargaining agreement.

48
49 *Civic Duties Leave*

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51 Employees shall be granted leave (with or without pay) for service on a jury, holding public
52 office, or in response to a subpoena, in accordance with state law. The District will notify
53 employees who were granted paid leave of any reimbursement requirements in the employee
54 handbook.

55
56 *Military Leave*

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58 Employees shall be granted leave for service in the military in accordance with state and federal
59 law. The District will comply with all federal and state regulations regarding the employee's
60 return to service following military leave.

61
62 *Vacation Leave*

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64 Administrators will be granted vacation leave pursuant to the terms of their individual contracts
65 and Montana law. Classified employees will be granted vacation leave pursuant to Montana law.
66 The District, in its sole discretion and/or subject to the terms of the collective bargaining
67 agreement, may provide cash compensation for unused vacation leave in lieu of the accumulation
68 of vacation leave.

69

70	Legal References:	§ 2-18-601, MCA	Definitions
71		§ 2-18-611, MCA	Annual vacation leave
72		§ 2-18-617, MCA	Accumulation of leave -- cash for unused -- transfer
73		§ 2-18-618, MCA	Sick Leave
74		§ 2-18-619, MCA	Jury duty – service as witness
75		§ 2-18-620, MCA	Mandatory leave for employees holding public
76			office – return requirements
77		2.21.222, ARM	Calculating Annual Vacation Leave Credits

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80 Cross References:

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82 Policy History:
83 Adopted on: 9.8.2015
84 Revised on:
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3 PERSONNEL

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5 Substitutes and Student Teachers/Interns

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7 Under certain circumstances, individuals other than the District-employed teaching staff
8 may be providing instruction to students in a classroom setting. The Board authorizes the
9 use of substitute teachers as necessary to replace teachers who are temporarily absent.

10 The District shall arrange for the substitute to work for the absent teacher. Under no
11 condition is a teacher to select or arrange for a private substitute. All substitute teachers
12 will be required to undergo fingerprint and background checks prior to being placed in a
13 classroom. The Board establishes a daily rate of pay for substitute teachers. No fringe
14 benefits are given to substitute teachers.

15
16 Substitutes for classified positions will be paid by the hour. When a classified employee
17 is called upon to substitute for a teacher, the teacher sub rate shall apply unless the
18 classified rate of pay is higher.

19
20 The District shall make an effort to cooperate with accredited institutions of higher
21 learning in the education of student teachers and other professionals in training (such as
22 interns) by providing a reasonable number of classroom and other real life situations each
23 year. The District and the respective training institutions shall enter into mutually
24 satisfactory agreements whereby the rules, regulations and guidelines of the practical
25 experiences shall be established.

26
27 The Superintendent shall coordinate all requests from cooperating institutions for
28 placement with building principals so that excessive concentrations of student teachers
29 and interns shall be avoided.

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31 References: 10.55.707, ARM Teacher and Specialist Licensure
32 10.55.716, ARM Substitutes
33 §20-4-101, MCA System and definitions of teacher and specialist
34 certification – student teacher exception

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36 Cross References:

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38 Policy History:

39 Adopted on: 8.13.2013

40 Revised on:

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3 PERSONNEL

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5 Employee Electronic Services

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7 The District provides technology including but not limited to: computers, devices, networks, and
8 Internet access to support the educational mission of the District and to enhance the curriculum
9 and learning opportunities for District students and staff.

10
11 Employees are to utilize the District’s computers, devices, networks and Internet services for
12 District related purposes and performance of job duties. Incidental personal use of District
13 technology is permitted as long as such use does not interfere with the employee’s job duties and
14 performance, with system operations, or other system users. “Incidental personal use” is defined
15 as use by an individual employee for occasional personal communications that does not interfere
16 with district operations or increase costs to the district. Employees are reminded that such
17 personal use must comply with this policy and all other applicable policies, procedures, and
18 rules.

19
20 General examples of *unacceptable* uses that are prohibited include, but are not limited to the
21 following:

- 22
- 23 1. Any use that is illegal or in violation of other policies, including harassing,
24 discriminatory or threatening communications and behavior, violations of copyright
25 laws, etc.;
 - 26 2. Any use involving materials that are obscene, pornographic, sexually explicit or
27 sexually suggestive;
 - 28 3. Any inappropriate communications with students or minors;
 - 29 4. Any use for private financial gain or commercial advertising or solicitation purposes;
 - 30 5. Any use as a forum for communicating by e-mail or other medium with other school
31 users or outside parties to solicit, proselytize, advocate or communicate the views of
32 an individual or non-school sponsored organization; to solicit membership in or
33 support of any non-school sponsored organization; or to raise funds for any non-
34 school purpose, whether profit or non-profit;
 - 35 6. Knowingly providing school e-mail addresses to outside parties whose intent is to
36 communicate with school employees, students and/or their families for non-school
37 purposes. Employees who are uncertain as to whether particular activities are
38 acceptable should seek further guidance from their immediate supervisor;
 - 39 7. Expressing personal views in a way that the recipients would consider them to be the
40 views of the school and/or district.
 - 41 8. Any use of unauthorized, personal networking hardware; connecting unauthorized
42 devices, for example; printers, wireless access points, network switches or routers, to
43 the district’s network;
 - 44 9. Downloading or loading of software applications without permission;
 - 45 10. Opening and forwarding any e-mail attachments (executable files) from unknown
46 sources that may contain viruses;

- 47 11. Sending or facilitating mass e-mails to school users or outside parties for school or
48 non-school purposes without a supervisor’s permission;
49 12. Any misuse or damage to the District’s technology and/or computer equipment; and
50 13. Misuse of computer passwords or accounts, including providing personal passwords;
51 to others;

52
53 The employee is responsible for his/her actions and activities involving district devices, network
54 and Internet services, and for his/her computer files, passwords and accounts. The District
55 retains control, custody and supervision of all computers, devices, networks, and Internet
56 services owned or leased by the District. The District reserves the right to monitor all computer
57 and Internet activity by employees and other system users. Employees have no expectation of
58 privacy in their use of school computers or devices, including all electronic communication, and
59 stored files.

60
61 Employees are expected to use appropriate judgment and caution in communications concerning
62 students and staff to ensure that personally identifiable information remains confidential.

63
64 Teachers, staff members and volunteers who utilize District computers or other devices for
65 instructional purposes with students have a duty of care to supervise such use. Teachers, staff
66 and volunteers are expected to be familiar with the District’s policies and rules concerning
67 student computer and Internet use and to enforce them. When, in the course of their duties,
68 employees/volunteers become aware of student violations, they are expected to stop the activity
69 and inform the building principal or other appropriate administrator.

70
71 Employees shall be responsible for any losses, costs or damages incurred by the District related
72 to violations of this policy and/or rules.

73
74 The District assumes no responsibility for any unauthorized charges made by employees
75 including but not limited to credit card charges, subscriptions, long distance telephone charges,
76 equipment and line costs, or for any illegal use on its computers or other devices.

77
78 Legal References:

79
80 Cross References:

81
82 Policy History:

83 Adopted on: 8.11.2015

84 Revised on:

2
3 SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

4
5 District Organization: Superintendent & District Clerk

6
7 The Superintendent shall develop an organizational chart indicating the lines of authority and
8 reporting relationships for school staff. The lines of authority and reporting shall be followed
9 except in unusual circumstances.

10
11 Staff should refer matters requiring administrative action to their immediate supervisor. The
12 decision of an administrator may be appealed to an administrative officer higher in the line of
13 authority.

14
15 Each employee should be primarily responsible to only one immediate supervisor. In cases
16 where more than one supervisor oversees the duties of an employee, the division of
17 responsibility must be clearly delineated.

18
19 If the Superintendent, building principal, or other administrator is temporarily absent, the line of
20 authority and responsibility of that office shall follow a successive plan. The succession plan
21 shall be developed by the Superintendent.

22
23 *Goals and Objectives*

24
25 The administrative staff’s primary functions are to manage the District and to facilitate the
26 implementation of a quality educational program. The administrative staff is responsible for:
27 1. effectively and efficiently managing the District’s programs, budget, and buildings;
28 2. providing educational leadership;
29 3. developing and maintaining channels for communication between the school system
30 and community;
31 4. developing procedures and regulations which implement Board policy; and
32 5. planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating educational programs.

33
34 *Superintendent*

35
36 The Superintendent is the District's chief executive officer and is responsible for the
37 administration and management of the District schools in accordance with Board policies and
38 directives, and State and federal law. The Superintendent is authorized to develop administrative
39 procedures/regulations to implement Board policy and to delegate duties and responsibilities.
40 Delegation of power or duty, however, shall not relieve the Superintendent of responsibility for
41 the action that was delegated.

42
43 *Qualifications and Appointment*

44
45 The Superintendent shall have the experience and the skills necessary to work effectively with
46 the Board, District employees, students, and the community. The Superintendent shall have a

47 valid administrative certificate and superintendent's endorsement issued by the State. When the
48 office of the Superintendent becomes vacant, the Board shall determine the appropriate process
49 for filling that vacancy, and shall appoint the individual chosen by the majority of the Board to
50 fill the position.

51
52 *Evaluation*

53
54 The Board will evaluate, at least annually, the performance of the Superintendent, using
55 standards and objectives developed by the Superintendent and Board which are consistent with
56 the District's mission and goal statements. A specific time should be designated for a formal
57 evaluation session. The evaluation should include a discussion of professional strengths as well
58 as performance areas needing improvement.

59
60 *Compensation and Benefits*

61
62 The Board and the Superintendent shall enter into a contract that conforms to this policy and
63 State law. This contract shall govern the employment relationship between the Board and the
64 Superintendent.

65
66 *District Clerk*

67
68 The Clerk of the Board shall attend all meetings of the Board, unless excused by the Chair, and
69 shall keep an accurate journal of its proceedings. The Clerk shall have custody of the records,
70 books, and documents of the Board. In the absence or inability of the Clerk to attend a Board
71 meeting, the trustees will have one (1) of their members or a District employee act as clerk for
72 the meeting, and said person will supply the Clerk with a certified copy of the proceedings.

73
74 The Clerk will keep accurate and detailed accounts of all receipts and disbursements made by the
75 District. The Clerk shall draw and countersign all warrants for expenditures that have been
76 approved by the Board. The Clerk will make the preparations legally required for the notice and
77 conduct of all District elections.

78
79 The Clerk shall prepare and submit to the Board a financial report of receipts and disbursements
80 of all school funds on an annual basis unless the Board requests such reports on a more frequent
81 basis. The Clerk shall perform other duties as prescribed by State law or as directed by the
82 Board and the Superintendent.

83
84 *Evaluation*

85
86 The Superintendent shall evaluate the Clerk at least once annually. The evaluation shall be based
87 on the job description and established evaluation criteria. The Clerk shall sign a copy of the
88 evaluation document and shall be provided a copy for his or her records. The Clerk shall have
89 the right to attach a written statement to the evaluation within (15) business days following the
90 evaluation conference.

91
92

93 Legal References: Mont. Const. Art. X, § 8
94 § 20-3-325, MCA Clerk of the district
95 § 20-3-321, MCA Organization and officers
96 10.55.701, ARM Board of Trustees
97 § 20-4-402, MCA Duties of district superintendent
98 § 20-4-401, MCA Appointment and dismissal of district
99 superintendent
100 § 20-3-324, MCA Powers and duties
101
102

103 Cross References:
104
105
106

107 Policy History:

108 Adopted on: 3.10.2015

109 Revised on:
110
111

2
3 OPERATIONAL SERVICES

4
5 Fiscal and Business Management

6
7 The Superintendent is responsible for the District’s fiscal and business management. To that
8 end, the Superintendent, in conjunction with the Clerk, shall prepare a budget that supports
9 immediate and long-range goals and established priorities within all areas i.e., instructional, non-
10 instructional, and administrative programs. This budget shall be presented to the Board prior to
11 the date required by state law.

12
13 *Budget Year, Adoption and Amendments*

14
15 The District’s fiscal year is from July 1 until June 30. Prior to presentation of the proposed
16 budget for adoption, the Superintendent and the Clerk shall prepare recommendations for the
17 Board’s consideration, with supporting documentation when necessary. This budget shall
18 represent the culmination of an ongoing process of planning for the fiscal support needed for the
19 District’s educational programs. Upon adoption by the Board, the budget shall be forwarded to
20 the County Superintendent as provided by law.

21
22 The Board may transfer money among funds as provided by law. In addition, the Board, by
23 resolution, may determine that a budget amendment is necessary and shall proceed to amend the
24 budget pursuant to law.

25
26 *Budget Implementation*

27
28 The Superintendent shall implement the District’s budget and provide the Board with a monthly
29 financial report. The amount budgeted as the expenditure in each fund is the maximum amount
30 that may be expended for that category, except when a transfer of funds is authorized by the
31 Board. All purchasing shall be handled pursuant to Board policy and any administrative
32 regulations.

34	Legal References:	§ 20-9-115, MCA	Notice of final budget meeting
35		§ 20-9-131, MCA	Final budget meeting
36		§ 20-9-133, MCA	Adoption and expenditure limitations of final
37			budget
38		§ 20-9-162, MCA	Authorization for budget amendment adoption
39		§ 20-9-163, MCA	Resolution for budget amendment

40
41 Cross References:

42
43 Policy History:

44 Adopted on: 4.14.2015

45 Revised on:

2
3 OPERATIONAL SERVICES

4
5 Accounting Standards

6
7 The Board intends that District accounting practices follow state and federal laws and regulations,
8 generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP), and other accounting principles adopted by the
9 Governmental Accounting Standards Board. The District shall follow a uniform financial accounting
10 system required by the Office of Public Instruction in coordination with the National Center for Education
11 Statistics of the United States of the Department of Education.

12
13 The Board of Trustees will review the financial activity and operations of the district based on the
14 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report and other financial reports in order to monitor the balances and
15 future actions as deemed necessary at that time.

16
17 Legal References:

18 Governmental Accounting Standards Board Statements

19 Cross References:

20
21
22 Policy History:

23 Adopted on: 4.14.2015

24 Revised on:

2
3 OPERATIONAL SERVICES

4
5 Purchasing

6
7 The Superintendent is authorized to direct expenditures and purchases within limits of the
8 annual budget for the school year. The Board must approve capital outlay items, when
9 the aggregate total of a requisition exceeds \$80,000, except the Superintendent shall have
10 the authority to make capital outlay purchases without prior approval when necessary to
11 protect the interests of the District or the health and safety of staff or students. The Clerk
12 will establish requisition and purchase order procedures to control and maintain proper
13 accounting of expenditure of funds.

14
15 Staff who obligate the District without proper authorization may be held personally
16 responsible for payment of such obligations. The Board adopts all applicable provisions
17 of the Montana Procurement Act.

18
19 *Bids and Contracts*

20
21 Whenever the cost of any supplies, equipment, or work shall exceed \$80,000, the District
22 will call for formal bids by issuing public notice as specified by law. Specifications will
23 be prepared and made available to all vendors interested in submitting a bid. The
24 contract shall be awarded to the lowest responsible bidder, except that the trustees may
25 reject any or all bids. The Board, in making a determination as to which vendor is the
26 lowest responsible bidder, will take into consideration not only the amount of each bid,
27 but will also consider the skill, ability, and integrity of a vendor to do faithful,
28 conscientious work and to promptly fulfill the contract according to its letter and spirit.
29 Bidding requirements do not apply to a registered professional engineer, surveyor, real
30 estate appraiser, or registered architect; a physician, dentist, pharmacist, or other medical,
31 dental, or health care provider; an attorney; a consulting actuary; a private investigator
32 licensed by any jurisdiction; a claims adjuster; or an accountant licensed under Title 37,
33 Chapter 50. The Superintendent will establish bidding and contract-awarding procedures.

34
35 *Cooperative Purchasing*

36
37 The District may enter into cooperative purchasing contracts with one or more districts
38 for procurement of supplies or services. Such services and supplies may be purchased
39 without complying with the above stated bidding requirements if the cooperative
40 purchasing group has a publicly available master list of items available with pricing
41 included and provides and opportunity at least twice yearly for any vendor to compete,
42 based on lowest responsible bidder standard, for inclusion of the vendor’s supplies and
43 services on the cooperative purchasing group’s master list.

44
45 Legal References: § 18-1-101 et seq., MCA Public Contracts

46 § 20-9-204, MCA Conflicts of interest, letting contracts
47 and calling for bids
48
49 Cross References:
50
51 Policy History:
52 Adopted on: 4.8.2014
53 Revised on:

2
3 OPERATIONAL SERVICES

4
5 Accounting and Audits

6
7 The Board of Trustees directs that the Business Office prepare official financial reports and
8 budgets in accordance with statutory provisions and/or generally accepted accounting standards.
9 Reports required for local, state, and federal agencies; monthly financial reports; and annual
10 reports will be prepared and presented to the Board for approval.

11
12 The Board directs that an annual audits be conducted in accordance with Montana law and
13 generally accepted auditing standards.

14
15
16 Legal References: § 20-9-203, MCA Examination of district accounting records
17 § 20-9-103, MCA School budget form
18 § 20-9-213, MCA Duties of trustees

19 Cross Reference:

20
21 Policy History:

22 Adopted on: 4.14.2015

23 Revised on:

24