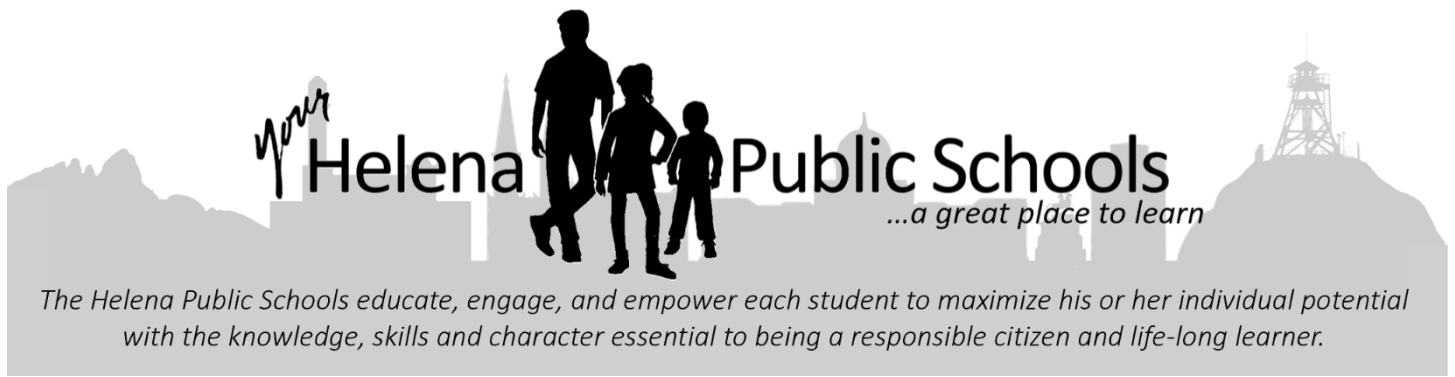




Board of Trustees Special Board Meeting

Tuesday, August 26th, 2025
Lincoln Center
1325 Poplar St., Helena, MT, 59601
1:30 p.m.

MINUTES

ATTENDEES

Siobhan Hathhorn, Trustee	Rex Wultz, Superintendent
Jennifer McKee, Chair	Josh McKay, Assistant Superintendent
Janet Armstrong, Trustee	Todd Verrill, Facilities Director
Kay Satre, Trustee	Candice Delvaux, Board Reporter
Linda Cleatus, Trustee	Gary Myers, Director of Educational Technology
Jenny Murnane Butcher, Trustee	Justine Alberts, Assistant Superintendent PreK-5
	Barb Ridgway, Chief of Staff
	Rob Brewer, Facilities Manager
	Kaitlyn Hess, Data & Federal Programs Director
	Taylor Lassiter, Communications Specialist
	Janelle Mickelson, Business Director
	Jane Shawn, HEA President
	Keri Mizell, Human Resources Director
	Shane Swandal, President of Hulteng CCM, Inc.
	Several Guests of the Public

I. CALL TO ORDER

Board Chair Jennifer McKee called the meeting to order at 1:34 p.m.

II. REVIEW OF AGENDA

The Board of Trustees reviewed the agenda, and no changes were made.

III. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no general public comment.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Consent Action Items

1. Personnel Actions
2. Confirmation of MTSBA's Principles & Guidelines
3. Confirmation of the Foundational Elements of MTSBA's DNA
4. FY27 Dues Revenue Estimate
5. Nomination of Rick Cummings (MTSBA Region 5 Director and Cascade Trustee) as MTSBA President-Elect
6. Nomination of Jennifer Hoffman (MTSBA Municipal Director from Billings Public Schools) as MTSBA Vice-President

Board Chair Jennifer McKee commented. "I would entertain a motion for the approval of the *Consent Action Items*."

The trustees held a discussion regarding the principles and role of the Montana School Boards Association (MTSBA). Reviewing the organization's guiding principles helped provide greater clarity on its functions, particularly its advocacy for adequate school funding and upholding constitutional guarantees. Trustees emphasized the value of staying actively engaged and informed, noting opportunities for involvement such as Think Tank Thursdays and action alerts.

Motion: Trustee Kay Satre moved to approve the *Consent Action Items* as presented. Trustee Jenny Murnane Butcher seconded the motion.

Public Comment: None.

Vote: 6-0 motion carries unanimously.

B. Items For Action

1. Approval of the Recommended Owner's Construction Representative

Mr. Todd Verrill, Facilities Director for Helena Public Schools, presented the action item *Approval of the Recommended Owner's Construction Representative* to the Board of Trustees. Mr. Verrill is respectfully requesting the board of trustees approve Hulteng CCM, Inc. as the district's Owner's Construction Representative (OCR) in preparation for the elementary and high school bond elections on 9 September 2025. Helena Public Schools submitted a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) on 19 July 2025, seeking firms to serve as OCR in the event that one or more of the bond measures pass. Seven qualified firms submitted statements of qualification by the deadline of 15 August 2025. A committee of administrators reviewed the seven applicants on 18-19 August 2025 and selected the top three qualified candidates. On 20-21 August 2025, the

committee interviewed the top three candidates and recommend Hulteng CCM, Inc. to serve the district as the OCR.

Mr. Swandal from Hulteng addressed the board to outline what his role would be if approved as the Owner's Construction Representative (OCR) for the district. He explained that his primary function would be to represent the district's best interests throughout the construction process. Responsibilities would include managing the RFQ/RFP selection processes for designers and contractors, ensuring transparent and compliant procedures, and assisting in drafting contracts that protect the district. During construction, he would be involved in plan reviews, systems analysis, change order evaluations, and ensuring the project stays on budget and meets performance expectations. He also described his involvement during the project closeout phase, ensuring all operational documents, warranties, and as-built plans are properly delivered to the district. Mr. Swandal emphasized ongoing day-to-day support for district staff and maintaining a strong focus on the district's long-term needs. He concluded by noting Hulteng's prior experience with similar large-scale bond projects, including work completed for this district in 2017 and for other major school districts in Montana.

Mr. Verrill addressed all questions from the Board of Trustees regarding the action item presented.

Board Chair Jennifer McKee commented. "I would entertain a motion for the *Approval of the Recommended Owner's Construction Representative.*"

Motion: Trustee Linda Cleatus moved to approve Hulteng CCM, Inc. as the district's Owner's Construction Representative (OCR) as presented. Trustee Kay Satree seconded the motion.

Public Comment: None.

Vote: 6-0 motion carries unanimously.

2. Approval of the Mount Ascension Elementary and Middle School: Student Performance Standards Action Plan for 2025-2026

Mr. Josh McKay, Assistant Superintendent 6-12, presented the action item *Approval of the Mount Ascension Elementary and Middle School: Student Performance Standards Action Plan for 2025-2026* to the Board of Trustees. Mr. McKay explained that, following the first year of operation for the district's charter schools, the Office of Public Instruction (OPI) identified areas for improvement—specifically related to student performance data submissions for accreditation purposes. Mount Ascension Elementary and Middle School received downgraded ratings due to the absence of standardized assessment data. Many students enrolled part-time, which exempts them from mandatory state assessments. While alternative performance evidence (e.g.,

personalized learning plans, project-based learning, and internal assessments) was submitted, it did not meet OPI's expectations for standardized reporting. Mr. McKay clarified that this action plan is a corrective response that outlines how the district intends to provide acceptable evidence of student performance moving forward, including the use of I-Ready assessments and other growth metrics. The district is also working with OPI to align expectations and develop feasible solutions for evaluating student performance in innovative charter environments. The plan must be approved by the board as a required element for submission to OPI. Mr. McKay emphasized that the plan reflects a broader statewide challenge and represents an effort to balance innovation in education with compliance requirements.

Mr. McKay addressed all questions from the Board of Trustees regarding the action item presented.

Board Chair Jennifer McKee commented. "I would entertain a motion for the *Approval of the Mount Ascension Elementary and Middle School: Student Performance Standards Action Plan for 2025-2026*.

Motion: Trustee Kay Satre moved to approve the *Mount Ascension Elementary and Middle School: Student Performance Standards Action Plan for 2025-2026* as presented. Trustee Jenny Murnane Butcher seconded the motion.

Public Comment: None.

Vote: 6-0 motion carries unanimously.

V. **BOARD/SUPERINTENDENT COMMENTS**

Superintendent Rex Weltz expressed appreciation to Trustee Cleatus for attending the Capital tour earlier that day with Principal Zanto. Gratitude was also extended to all trustees—both in person and online—for adjusting their schedules to attend the special meeting today.

VI. **ADJOURNMENT**

Board Chair Jennifer McKee adjourned the meeting at 2:22 p.m.