



Board of Trustees Special Board Meeting

August 26th, 2025

Lincoln Center

1325 Poplar Street

Helena, MT 59601

1:30 p.m.

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AGENDA

I. CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

II. REVIEW OF AGENDA

III. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

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

IV. 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

B. Items For Action

1. Approval of the Recommended Owner's Construction Representative
2. Approval of the Mount Ascension Elementary and Middle School: Student Performance Standards Action Plan for 2025-2026

V. BOARD/SUPERINTENDENT COMMENTS

VI. ADJOURNMENT

HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board of Trustees Meeting

Meeting Date: 8/26/2025

Item I.

☒ Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance

☐ Review of Agenda

☐ General Public Comment

☐ Consent Action Items

☐ Items For Action

☐ Board/Superintendent Comments

☐ Adjournment

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

HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board of Trustees Meeting

Meeting Date: 8/26/2025

Item II.

☐ Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance

☒ Review of Agenda

☐ General Public Comment

☐ Consent Action Items

☐ Items For Action

☐ Board/Superintendent Comments

☐ Adjournment

Item Title: **Review of Agenda**

HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board of Trustees Meeting

Item III.

Meeting Date: 8/26/2025

☐ Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance

☐ Review of Agenda

☒ General Public Comment

☐ Consent Action Items

☐ Items For Action

☐ Board/Superintendent Comments

☐ Adjournment

Item Title: **General Public Comment**

HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board of Trustees Meeting

Meeting Date: 8/26/2025

Item IV.A.1. - A.6.

- ☐
- Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance
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- ☐
- Review of Agenda
-
- ☐
- General Public Comment
-
- ☒
- Consent Action Items
-
- ☐
- Items For Action
-
- ☐
- Board/Superintendent Comments
-
- ☐
- Adjournment

Item Title: **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 Action	1st Motion	Second	Aye	Nay	Other
Hathhorn					
McKee					
Robison					
Satre					
Murnane Butcher					
Cleatus					
Walsh					
Armstrong					

PERSONNEL ACTIONS

August 13, 2025 – August 26, 2025

CERTIFIED PERSONNEL

Appointments

<u>Location/Assignment</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Offered Salary</u>	<u>Accepted Salary</u>	<u>Start Date</u>
Four Georgians/School Nurse (.75 FTE)	Allen, Andrea	\$43,183.91/yr	\$43,183.91/yr	08/25/2025
PAL/Mathematics	Bryden, Sage	\$57,578.55/yr	\$57,578.88/yr	08/25/2025
Lincoln Center/K-8 TOSA	Buresh, Ashlie	\$81,073.73	\$81,073.73/yr	08/25/2025
Bryant/Broadwater/Guest School Nurse (.70 FTE)	Drake, Terra	\$201.89/day	\$201.89/day	08/25/2025
Jim Darcy-Rossiter/School Nurse	Hill, Carli	\$61,222.38/yr	\$61,222.38/yr	08/25/2025
District Wide/Adaptive PE Teacher	Holland, Leslie	\$51,973.70/yr	\$51,973.70/yr	08/25/2025
Rossiter/4 th Grade	Martinez, Ashlee	\$48,612.28	\$48,612.28/yr	08/25/2025
Four Georgians/1 st Grade	Nault, Renae	\$47,940.00	\$47,940.00/yr	08/25/2025
CRA/Music	Nickerson, Nancy	\$256.36/day	\$256.36/day	08/25/2025
CRA/School Nurse	Otteson, Mamie	\$61,222.38/yr	\$61,222.38/yr	08/25/2025
Four Georgians/5 th Grade	Schuma, Maggie	\$49,284.57/yr	\$49,284.57/yr	08/25/2025
HMS/School Nurse (.80 FTE)	Vitousek, Howard	\$55,284.68/yr	\$55,284.68/yr	08/25/2025
Warren/Guest School Counselor	Zoeckler, Jordan	\$256.36/day	\$256.36/day	08/25/2025

Terminations/Retirements

<u>Location/Assignment</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Reason</u>	<u>Effective</u>
HMS/Mathematics	Jonak, Sarah	Resignation	08/25/2025

Leaves

<u>Location/Assignment</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Term</u>	<u>Type of Leave</u>
District Wide/Adaptive PE Teacher	Solomon, Lisa	08/25/2025 to 06/10/2026	LOAWOP

CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL

Appointments

<u>Location/Assignment</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Offered Salary</u>	<u>Accepted Salary</u>	<u>Start Date</u>
Four Georgians/Para Educator	Aldrich, Robyn	\$19.03/hr.	\$19.03/hr.	08/25/2025
Smith/Para Educator	Beran, Sarah	\$16.81/hr.	\$16.81/hr.	08/25/2025
Smith/Para Educator	Bourquin, Hailey	\$15.50/hr.	\$15.50/hr.	08/25/2025
Bryant/Para Educator	Daniels, Lainie	\$15.50/hr.	\$15.50/hr.	08/25/2025
Jefferson/Para Educator	Edgar, Brennaugh	\$15.50/hr.	\$15.50/hr.	08/25/2025
CRA/Evening Custodian	Edwards, Isaiah	\$16.90/hr.	\$16.90/hr.	08/11/2025
Jefferson/ELTI Para Educator	Edwards, Teresa	\$19.03/hr.	\$19.03/hr.	08/25/2025
Jefferson/Secretary	Garcia, Stacy	\$19.72/hr.	\$19.72/hr.	08/13/2025
Kessler/Para Educator	Gaydos, Jasmine	\$16.15/hr.	\$16.15/hr.	08/25/2025
Kessler/Para Educator	Gilleland, Alicia	\$16.16/hr.	\$16.16/hr.	08/25/2025
Lincoln/Network Engineer	Grau, Christopher	\$88,398.06/yr.	\$88,398.06/yr.	09/17/2025
Bryant/Para Educator (.293 FTE)	Phillips, Reyse	\$16.81/hr.	\$16.81/hr.	08/25/2025
Explore School/Para Educator (.81 FTE)	Quigley, Grayson	\$17.93/hr.	\$17.93/hr.	08/25/2025
Bryant/ELTI Para Educator	Starman, Kayleigh	\$16.16/hr.	\$16.16/hr.	08/25/2025
CHS/ISS Para Educator	Synness, Timothy	\$17.98/hr.	\$17.98/hr.	08/25/2025
Jefferson/Para Educator	Vangundy, Sarah	\$17.93/hr.	\$17.93/hr.	08/25/2025

Terminations/Retirements

<u>Location/Assignment</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Reason</u>	<u>Effective</u>
Central/Para Educator	Sweet, Trevor	Resignation	08/14/2025
Jefferson/Evening Custodian	Robbins, Mason	Resignation	08/07/2025

Leaves

<u>Location/Assignment</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Term</u>	<u>Type of Leave</u>
Bryant/Para Educator	Neal, Bruce	08/25/2025 to 09/19/2025	LOAWOP

SUPPLEMENTARY CONTRACT ASSIGNMENT

Name	Assignment	Salary	Start Date	End Date	Location
Bignell, Nate	Football-Assist	\$1,777.00	8/14/2025	11/22/2025	Helena High
Northey, Mark	Football Assist Frosh	\$1,086.50	8/14/2025	11/22/2025	Capital High

2025 MTSBA Membership Electronic Vote

Introduction

Dear MTSBA Member:

Given our lack of registrations to meet our quorum requirements, the 2025 Annual Meeting in June was cancelled. Therefore, we are conducting the necessary business of the Association at this time via electronic means pursuant to the MTSBA Bylaws.

Please cast the vote on behalf of your Board of Trustees on the following items that come as a seconded motion from the MTSBA Board of Directors:

- 1. Confirmation of MTSBA current Principles and Guidelines;**
- 2. Confirmation of the current foundational elements of MTSBA's DNA;**
- 3. FY27 Dues Revenue Estimate: NOTE: You are not voting on your District's FY27 Dues; rather, this is the FY27 Dues Revenue Estimate that is calculated pursuant to the MTSBA Bylaws;**
- 4. Nomination of Rick Cummings (MTSBA Region 5 Director and Cascade Trustee) as MTSBA President-Elect; and**
- 5. Nomination of Jennifer Hoffman (MTSBA Municipal Director from Billings Public Schools) as MTSBA Vice-President.**

As always, thank you for your time.

Lance L. Melton
MTSBA Executive Director

* 1. Please provide the NAME of your School District. Note: Do not provide provide a School District No.

**NAME of your
District**

* 2. Please provide the NAME of the individual who is submitting this electronic vote on behalf of the Board of Trustees.

Name

* 3. Please indicate whether your School District supports or opposes the MTSBA Principles & Guidelines as presented.

- ☐ Our School District **approves** the MTSBA Principles & Guidelines as presented.
- ☐ Our School District **opposes** the MTSBA Principles & Guidelines as presented.
- ☐ Our School District **abstains** from voting on this issue.

* 4. Please indicate whether your School District supports or opposes the Foundational Elements of MTSBA's Organizational DNA as presented.

- ☐ Our School District **approves** the Foundational Elements of MTSBA's Organizational DNA as presented.
- ☐ Our School District **opposes** the Foundational Elements of MTSBA's Organizational DNA as presented
- ☐ Our School District **abstains** from voting on this issue.

* 5. Please indicate whether your School District supports or opposes the FY27 Dues Revenue Estimate. *NOTE: You are not voting on your District's FY27 Dues; rather, this is the FY27 Dues Revenue Estimate that is calculated pursuant to the member-adopted MTSBA Bylaws.*

- ☐ Our School District **approves** the FY27 Dues Revenue Estimate
- ☐ Our School District **opposes** the the FY27 Dues Revenue Estimate
- ☐ Our School District **abstains** from voting on this issue.

* 6. Please indicate whether your School District supports or opposes the nomination of Rick Cummings (MTSBA Region 5 Director and Cascade Trustee) as MTSBA President-Elect (and unanimously nominated by the MTSBA Board of Directors).

- ☐ Our School District **approves** Rick Cummings as MTSBA President-Elect.
- ☐ Our School District **opposes** Rick Cummings as MTSBA President-Elect.
- ☐ Our School District **abstains** from voting on this issue.

* 7. Please indicate whether your School District supports or opposes the nomination of Jennifer Hoffman (MTSBA Municipal Director from Billings Public Schools) as MTSBA Vice-President (and unanimously nominated by the MTSBA Board of Directors).

- ☐ Our School District **approves** Jennifer Hoffman as MTSBA Vice-President.
- ☐ Our School District **opposes** Jennifer Hoffman as MTSBA Vice-President.
- ☐ Our School District **abstains** from voting on this issue.

* 8. Signature of Board Chair. By inserting the name of your Board Chair here, this confirms and has the legal impact of your Board Chair's legal signature.

Name

Principles and Guidelines
Approved by the MTSBA Membership: July 2024
Proposed for Further Approval in July 2025

The purpose of this document is two-fold. First, it is intended to provide a framework of governance for school districts throughout Montana. You, as school board trustees, can review these Principles and Guidelines and use them as a guide to fulfill the Peoples' goal of developing the full educational potential of each child in your district. Secondly, this document identifies key advocacy issues that MTSBA will pursue on behalf of trustees, school districts, and each student in Montana in the pursuit of educational excellence.

Principle I

Alignment of efforts and activities with the Peoples' goal of developing the full educational potential of all the state's citizens while guaranteeing equality of educational opportunity to each person of the state.

Relevant Guidelines for School Boards:

School boards should:

1. Embrace excellence in the governance of their local public schools. This can be accomplished through coherent and aligned governance devoted to visionary and strategic based leadership, setting high expectations for all, embracing a culture of collaboration and team-building, and other practices and strategies that are focused on developing the full potential of each child.
2. School boards should remain focused on the success of each child in carrying out their statutory obligation to collectively bargain in good faith with their public employees in compliance with 39-31-305, MCA. Maintaining a focus on the individualized success of each child will help ensure that limited resources are used in the most effective and efficient manner possible in pursuing the people's goal of developing the full potential of each child.
3. Employ staff who are highly qualified and engaging.
4. Embrace the concept of personalized learning for all students embracing individualized, applied, work-based and distance learning opportunities to meet each child on their own terms to ensure student success. Create a safe environment for all that is conducive to learning, free from bullying, harassment, and intimidation.
5. Encourage and welcome parental and family involvement to help understand each child's needs.
6. Advocate in every possible manner for adequate school funding to pursue and accomplish the Peoples' goal of developing the full educational potential of each student.

Relevant Guidelines for MTSBA Activities:

MTSBA must:

1. Advocate for adequate, rational and flexible funding for schools, sufficient to allow school districts to meaningfully comply with and provide an education worthy of the definition of the basic system of free quality schools in 20-9-309, MCA.

Principle II

Recognition of the shared authority for education between the community, locally elected school boards, and the bodies with constitutional authority and responsibility for education, including the Governor, the Montana Board of Public Education, and the Legislature.

Relevant Guidelines for School Boards:

School boards should:

1. Strongly embrace and advocate for the preservation of locally-made decisions within our communities.
2. Conscientiously use local, state, and federal resources to successfully educate students.
3. Engage, educate, and enlist the support of community members regarding the public schools' charge of developing the full educational potential of each child.

Relevant Guidelines for MTSBA Activities:

MTSBA must:

1. Advocate for supervision and control of the schools in each district by the community-elected board of trustees working in collaboration with the community in which they serve as the best way to ensure that all students are college, career and life ready, equipped to choose and thrive in a career of their choice.
2. Support and advocate for proper exercise of the Board of Public Education's and the Legislature's respective authority. The Board of Public Education is to exercise "general supervision" over the basic system of free quality schools, which should be exercised in a manner that does not intrude on the more specific and expansive authority of elected school boards to "supervise and control" education in each community. The Legislature is to define the basic system of free quality schools and fund it rationally, recognizing the Board of Public Education's accreditation standards which represent the minimum standards upon which the basic system of free quality schools is built.
3. Advocate for and enforce the constitutional guarantee and requirement that all publicly funded K-12 education in Montana be supervised and controlled by school boards publicly elected by the qualified electors in each district as required by Article X, Section 8 and Article IV, Section 2 of the Montana Constitution.

Principle III

Equality of educational opportunity for each person of the state.

Relevant Guidelines for School Boards:

School boards should:

1. Ensure that all resident children have full access to the programs and resources of their local public schools.
2. Ensure the opportunity to succeed for each child.

Relevant Guidelines for MTSBA Activities:

MTSBA must:

1. Work to provide adequate and equitable funding so that local boards can provide each child's access to programs and services.
2. Protect the equal right to respect, dignity, and opportunity for each child.

Principle IV

Recognition of and commitment to the preservation of the distinct and unique cultural heritage of American Indians.

Relevant Guidelines for School Boards:

School boards should:

1. Implement and maintain programs to preserve and educate its students regarding the cultural heritage and language of American Indian peoples and tribes.
2. Collaborate with American Indian peoples and tribes to ensure that educational programming is culturally relevant and in harmony with the corresponding efforts of tribal governments, education departments and tribal colleges.

Relevant Guidelines for MTSBA Activities:

MTSBA must:

1. Work to provide adequate funding for and state-wide commitment to Indian Education for All.
2. Recognize the negative impact that concentrated poverty can have on cultural preservation and pride and advocate for legislation to address and mitigate these negative impacts, including but not limited to advocacy for resources to address poverty, such as impact aid legislation.

Principle V

Balance between Church and State.

Relevant Guidelines for Trustees:

School boards should:

1. In accordance with our obligation of guarding the constitutional rights of families and children and in accordance with applicable court rulings, ensure an appropriate balance between freedom of religion and avoidance of endorsement of a particular religion.

Relevant Guidelines for MTSBA Activities:

MTSBA must:

1. Advocate for balance between the core religion issues expressed in the United States Constitution through the Establishment Clause, which bans the government from "establishing" a religion; and the Free Exercise Clause, which protects citizens' right to practice their religion. MTSBA shall use relevant holdings of the United States Supreme Court to guide its efforts and positions on these issues.
2. Advocate for continued support of student and family religious freedom.

Principle VI

Collaboration among and with our locally-elected school boards.

Relevant Guidelines for Trustees:

School boards should:

1. Recognize the shared bond among and autonomous authority of locally-elected school boards in exercising supervision and control of their respective public schools pursuant to Article X, Section 8 of the Montana Constitution;
2. Recognize the value of outreach to and collaboration among our locally-elected school boards and school districts;
3. Recognize and respect the potential for divergence in the interests of different area school boards when each are exercising supervision and control of their respective local public schools;
4. Recognize the dilution of effectiveness in MTSBA's advocacy when based on simple majorities rather than broad consensus among our member school boards.
5. Ensure open lines of communication among the constitutionally empowered trustees in areas throughout the state.
6. Work to resolve differences among area school boards and school districts through local solutions whenever possible.
7. Work to isolate the impact of division among school districts in a given area on overall unity and resulting effectiveness within and among state education organizations representing local school boards and their staff.

Relevant Guidelines for MTSBA Activities:

MTSBA must:

1. Understand, respect and equitably balance the interests of our member school boards while ensuring that the voices of all our members are heard and acknowledged in MTSBA's advocacy.
2. Maintain a focus on and reserve its resources to address issues of statewide impact and concern in its advocacy and maintain neutrality on issues of limited statewide impact that divide our members. When issues of limited statewide impact involve division among our members, MTSBA advocacy must be limited to providing information to all of our affected members on an equitable and neutral basis.
3. Identify and attempt to resolve division within our membership whenever possible through neutral facilitation of dialogue and transparent provision of information to its members.

Appendix “A” To MTSBA’s Principles and Guidelines References for MTSBA Principles & Guidelines

Principle I --

- Montana Constitution, Article X, section 1
- Core Purpose of MTSBA, Strategic Plan
- Core Purpose of the basic system of free quality schools, K-12 Vision Project

Principle II –

- Montana Constitution, Article X, Section 8, Locally-Elected Trustees
- Montana Constitution, Article X, Section 9, Board of Public Education
- Core Values, MTSBA
- Core Values, K-12 Vision Project

Principle III –

- Montana Constitution, Article X, Section 7
- MTSBA Core Values (balance in treating and addressing needs of members)

Principle IV –

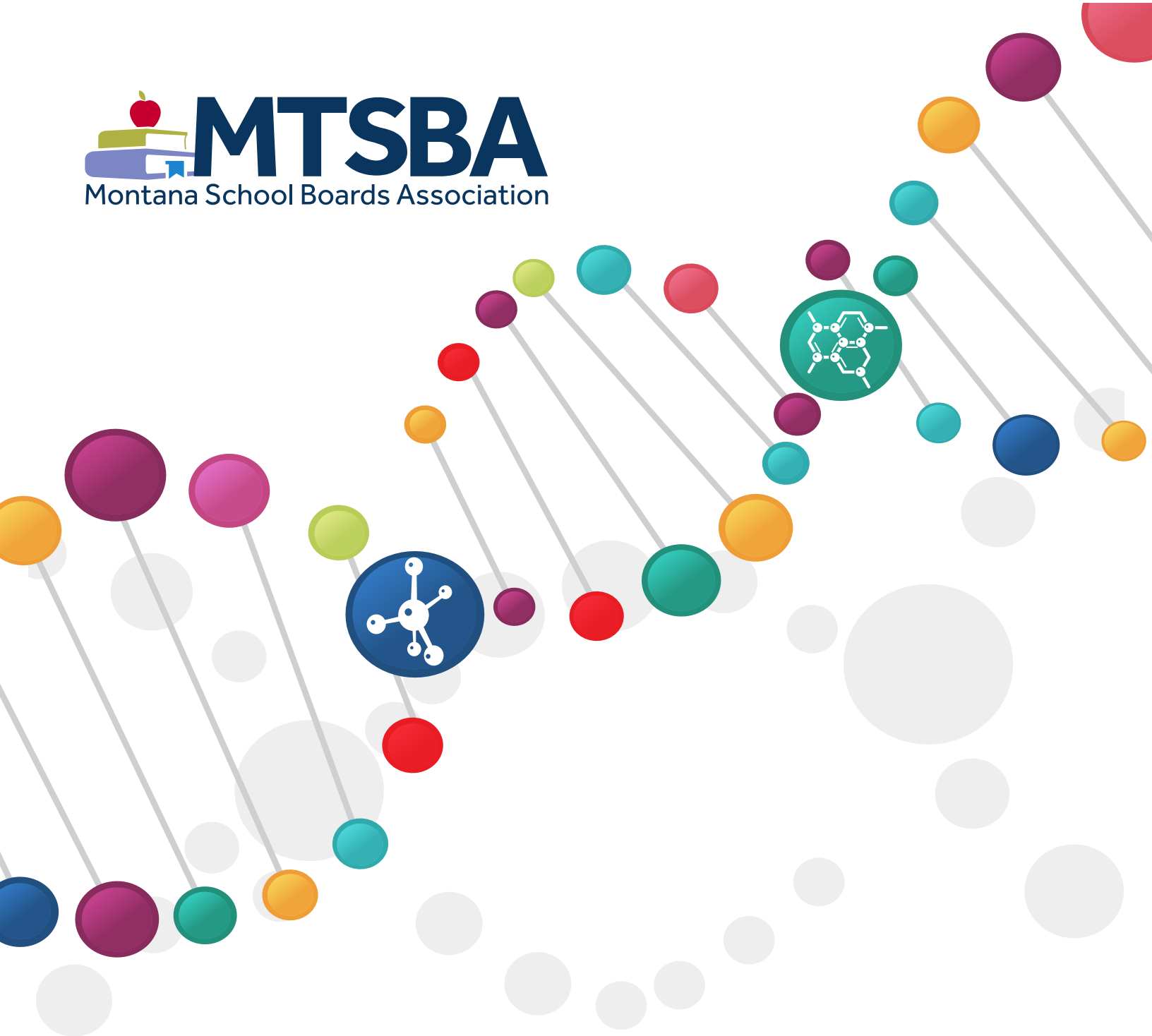
- Montana Constitution, Article X, Section 1(2)
- MTSBA Core Values
- K-12 Vision Project Core Values

Principle V –

- MCA, 20-5-109
- *Kennedy v. Bremerton School District* (2022) and other U.S. Supreme Court cases
- *Kaptein v. Conrad*

Principle VI –

- Montana Constitution, Article X, Section 8, elected trustees
- MTSBA Core Value: “We understand and respect the variety of circumstances in which our members govern, and the variety of perspectives held by our members. We strive to meet the needs of and balance the interests of each of our members.”
- MTSBA Board of Directors Goal Area 1 - Engaged and United Advocacy For *Each Child* in Every Public School



The Foundational Elements of MTSBA's Organizational DNA

Synthesized from common themes/fused elements reflected in the MTSBA Member Adopted Principles and Guidelines, the MTSBA Board's Strategic Plan, and the MTSBA Board's Specific, Methodical and Consistent Practices Recipe.



Key Sources of Authority for MTSBA

MTSBA Core Purpose:

To develop the full
potential of each child
through school board
leadership.

MTSBA Core Values:

Visionary Leadership - We embrace vision and innovation in all that we do, continually adapting to the changing needs, wants and preferences of our members.

Advocacy - We advocate for EACH child in EVERY public school in Montana.

Empowered School Boards - We empower community engaged, elected school boards in their Constitutional mission to fulfill the potential of each child.

Member-Centric - We understand, respect, and balance the interests of each of our members.

Constitutional Guardian - We guard and defend all Article X constitutional guarantees for each child.

American Indian Peoples and Tribes - We help our members preserve the history and cultural integrity of American Indian Peoples and Tribes.

MTSBA Specific, Methodical and Consistent (SMaC) Practices:

1. We focus on assisting our members with reaching the full potential of EACH CHILD;
2. Our Strategic Plan drives the work of the Board and the staff. We always look at what's coming up on the horizon that impacts our members, planning for changes and aligning our budgetary priorities with our strategic objectives;
3. We integrate knowledge-based decision-making in all member discussions/decisions, and we must ensure expanded involvement of our members in our decision-making processes;
4. We strive to implement solutions that collectively benefit our members, and which do not divide or disengage our membership, exercising fairness and balance in addressing the diverse needs of our members;
5. Each Director meaningfully participates and engages in the governance of the Association, effectively communicates with the membership and serves as an ambassador of MTSBA's programs and services;
6. We encourage leadership of individual champions on the Board of Directors who rise above and beyond the call of duty and inspire those serving with and for them;
7. The Board and staff work in collaboration for the collective benefit of our membership now and into the future;
8. We strategically devote the time and resources necessary to ensure outcomes consistent with our core purpose;
9. We foster opportunities to develop personal relationships that strengthen the organization and enable us to meet challenges more effectively;
10. We continually adapt and innovate to meet the needs, wants and preferences of our members, to help our members succeed in promoting initiatives that support each student's success;
11. We instill trust and openness in our relations with each other and with our membership;
12. We prioritize professional development for the Board and staff;
13. We take the lead in advocating for public education and EACH child served by our membership;
14. We advocate for and educate our members on the innovations that advance personalized learning for EACH child and efficient district operations;
15. We align our programs and services with our Core Purpose and Core Values; and
16. We deliberately choose and conform to a governance model of "representative of".

"Representative of": Board members who view their role as ensuring that the views, beliefs, values, and self-interests of the constituencies they know the best are on the table as part of the conversation. They voice interests and opinions of those they know best and vote on behalf of the best overall interests of the organization. We avoid a "representative for" model, by which board members see themselves as the elected representatives of a particular constituency. They voice only the self-interests and opinions of that constituency and vote only on behalf of that constituency's interests.

In Carrying Out our Work on Behalf of Our Members, the Montana School Boards Association:



Sees the world through the eyes of the elected trustee and dedicates its programs and services to helping school boards develop the full potential of EACH child in every public school in Montana.



Operates from a nonpartisan orientation in all that it does, determining its support for and opposition to proposals on the basis of alignment with strategic/member adopted priorities, and without regard to the positions of political parties or ideology regarding such proposals.



Is driven by its strategic planning and related processes and tightly aligns all that it does to the plan. We fully integrate strategy into everything we do.



Generates its success through the leadership of fully engaged, knowledgeable and selfless directors who work for the benefit of, are committed to understanding and who are devoted to equitably balancing and fulfilling the interests of all member districts. Our directors set aside the specific interests of their own school district and understand their obligation to serve all school districts in fulfilling the potential of EACH child in every public school.



Works for the collective benefit of its members, striving to create clarity and consensus regarding its key initiatives and exercising fairness and balance in addressing the diverse needs of our members.



Executes its strategy through advocacy, services, and innovation, demonstrating visionary leadership in and striving for excellence in all that we do.



Guards the constitutional guarantees afforded children in Article X of the Montana Constitution, including but not limited to:

- Opportunities for each child to fulfill their educational potential;
- The right of each child to access a basic system of free quality schools in every Montana community, adequately and equitably funded;
- A balanced structure of checks and balances between elected school boards, the Board of Public Education, and the Legislature; and
- A commitment to education regarding the preservation, appreciation and understanding of American Indian culture.



Operates with Transparency and Trust, providing our members with ready access and an open invitation to observe and hold us accountable for conducting ourselves in a manner that is consistent with our principles and to measure our successes and failures in the context of our adherence to the norms of behavior that have been defined and adopted by the MTSBA Board of Directors and its member school boards throughout the state.



MTSBA Member-Adopted Principles and Guidelines:



Principle I

Alignment of efforts and activities with the goal of developing the full educational potential of all the state's citizens while guaranteeing equality of educational opportunity to each person of the state

Principle II

Recognition of the shared authority for education between the community, locally elected school boards, and the bodies with constitutional authority and responsibility for education, including the Governor, the Montana Board of Public Education, and the Legislature

Principle III

Equality of Educational Opportunity for each person of the state

Principle IV

Recognition and commitment to the preservation of the distinct and unique cultural heritage of American Indians

Principle V

Balance between Church and State

Principle VI

Collaboration among and with our locally elected school boards



About the Impressive Contributions of our Members

The founding of Montana's public schools pre-dates Montana's statehood by 25 years.

Creation of a system of public schools was one of the first actions of the First Montana Territorial Legislative Assembly in 1864.

Since the first public school opened in Virginia City in 1865, **Montana's public schools have been preparing Montana children for a future of success over the last 150 years**, governed by community-elected trustees all along the way.

Over 1,450

elected trustees in Montana volunteer nearly 750,000 hours each year in pursuit of increased student achievement, taking on complex and sometimes controversial challenges **with no compensation whatsoever.**

The **combined annual volunteer service of our members would take an individual 86 continuous years, working 24 hours per day**, to match.

When we say that our members provide a lifetime of service each year, we mean that literally.

Our members' annual contributions are **equivalent to 360 FTE positions provided free of charge each year**, providing taxpayers **over \$14 million in savings each year** compared to what those positions would cost if filled by employees.

Our **members oversee the employment of over 25,000 public employees** who educate, support, transport supervise, feed and protect the safety of over **155,000+ children**, in virtually every community in the state, every day of the week throughout the school year.

Our boards govern for **excellence and efficiency in equal measures** and the results of their efforts speak for themselves.

Montana's public schools provide performance that compares favorably by any measure, nationally or even internationally and our **members deliver these results for below average costs** when compared to other states in our Nation.

Our members **ensure preservation and fulfillment of important constitutional guarantees afforded Montana's citizens.**

FY27 Dues Revenue Estimate

Obligation: As per our bylaws, the Executive Director must estimate dues revenue and present it to the Board of Directors for approval before a vote of the membership. The MTSBA Board of Directors approved the FY27 Dues Revenue Estimate.

Background: Dues were frozen for FY26, resulting in a \$60,000 reduction in revenue compared to what would have been generated by the formula. This freeze was the first of its kind since implementation of the formula in 2004.

Recommendation for FY27: Restore dues in line with spending-sensitive formulas, estimating an increase in dues as follows:

- Current Average Member Spending from FY20-23: \$1,792,230,040
- Current Average Member Spending from FY21-24: \$1,850,301,527
- Percentage increase in Member Spending of 3.24%
- Projected Increase in Dues Revenue:
 - Total Estimated MTSBA Dues Revenue for FY27: \$1,159,292
 - Total Estimated Increase in Dues Compared to FY26: \$30,318
 - Percentage Increase in Dues Revenue: 2.69%



Rick Cummings, President Elect

Rick Cummings has served as a trustee on the Cascade School Board for over 20 years. Dates served include 2002-2018 and 2020 to present. He has served on the MTSBA board from 2014 to 2018 and from 2022 to present and is the acting President-Elect, subject to membership approval.

Rick is a farmer/rancher on a family farm East of Cascade. Along with his wife, Nanette, they continue to farm the same land Rick's great-grandfather homesteaded in 1906.

Rick is a graduate of Montana State University - Bozeman with a degree in agricultural business and minors in economics and philosophy.

Rick and his wife are proud parents of two grown children. Their son Cory lives in Washington, DC with his wife Katherine and their five-year-old daughter Margaret. Cory works for FEMA and Katherine works for the USDA. Their daughter Kacie recently moved to Oakland, CA to begin her general surgery residency.



Jennifer Hoffman, Vice President

Jennifer Hoffman, a lifelong resident of Billings, proudly serves as a trustee for Billings Public Schools since 2019. Jennifer currently holds the position of board chair. In addition to her role on the local board, she has been a member of the Montana School Boards Association (MTSBA) Board since 2022, where she currently serves as acting Vice President, subject to membership approval.

Outside of her professional commitments, Jennifer is a dedicated mother to two teenagers, Payton and Mason. In her leisure time, she enjoys a variety of hobbies, including baking delicious treats, tending to her garden, diving into a good book, and cherishing moments with her family and their two adorable Golden Doodles, Charlie and Simon.

HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board of Trustees Meeting

Item IV.B.1.

Meeting Date: 8/26/2025

☐ Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance

☐ Review of Agenda

☐ General Public Comment

☐ Consent Action Items

☒ Items For Action

☐ Board/Superintendent Comments

☐ Adjournment

Item Title: **Item For Action**
1. Approval of the Recommended Owner’s Construction Representative

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

Helena Public Schools – Facilities Office



Todd J. Verrill

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

Helena School District Board of Trustees

1325 Poplar St.
Helena, MT 59601-0939
boardoftrustees@helenaschools.org

22 August 2025

Dear Helena School District Board of Trustees,

I respectfully request 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.

Sincerely,

Todd J. Verrill

HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board of Trustees Meeting

Meeting Date: 8/26/2025

Item IV.B.2.

- ☐
- Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance
-
- ☐
- Review of Agenda
-
- ☐
- General Public Comment
-
- ☐
- Consent Action Items
-
- ☒
- Items For Action
-
- ☐
- Board/Superintendent Comments
-
- ☐
- Adjournment

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

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



Josh McKay
Assistant Superintendent
jmckay@helenaschools.org

Lincoln Center
1325 Poplar St.
Helena, Montana

Mount Ascension Elementary and Middle School:
Student Performance Standards Action Plan for 2025-2026

Date 8/22/2025

To: Helena School Board of Trustees

Fr: Josh McKay, Assistant Superintendent

Re: Recommendation to the Trustees to approve the action plan presented below.

Background

The Helena Mount Ascension Charter Elementary and Middle school met charter school application requirements. In the accreditation process, these schools received 2 out of 4 points in Math and ELA School Student Performance Standards. The school received the maximum point values in School Assurance Standards.

The OPI required student performance data submissions for Math and ELA students based on state assessments (MAST). The district submitted student performance tasks in each category to the OPI.

Dilemma

Most students enrolled in the Mount Ascension Charter Elementary and Middle School are less than full time, which means they are not required to participate in state assessments and or local benchmark assessments. Students participating in these charters often prefer not to take state and local assessments. They do however want to participate in educational opportunities of their choice. Parents and Students choose the courses they want to participate in. This is a cornerstone concept of our approved charters. This means they may not choose instruction in Math or ELA. This information was shared with OPI.

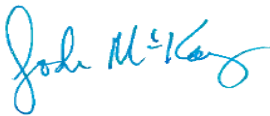
Recommended Action plan for the board to consider for Approval

To improve the point value assignment assigned by OPI, both Mount Ascension Elementary and Middle Schools in conjunction with district leadership will:

- 1) Develop another alternative assessment measure (classroom performance tasks) and collaborate with OPI to ensure the data submission meets the standards of the OPI reviewers.

- 2) Collaborate with OPI to ensure the correct value be assigned in advance of the next submission (even though the district contends that the initial submission was correct as per t testing requirements).
- 3) Facilitate additional opportunities for students to complete i-Ready at home.
- 4) Encourage the OPI to create an option for students to take the MAST at home, something that is not possible currently.
- 5) Continue to remind OPI that part-time students are not required to participate in the state tests as per the state rule.
- 6) Continue to submit data on the timelines required.
- 7) Continue to ask the OPI and Board of Education to re-evaluate the point assignments that occurred.
- 8) Continue to offer opportunities for full-time students to take the MAST assessment on their own time.

Most Respectfully,



Josh McKay
Assistant Superintendent
Helena Public Schools

HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board of Trustees Meeting

Meeting Date: 8/26/2025

Item V.

☐ Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance

☐ Review of Agenda

☐ General Public Comment

☐ Consent Action Items

☐ Items For Action

☒ Board/Superintendent Comments

☐ Adjournment

Item Title: **Board/Superintendent Comments**

HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board of Trustees Meeting

Item VI.

Meeting Date: 8/26/2025

☐ Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance

☐ Review of Agenda

☐ General Public Comment

☐ Consent Action Items

☐ Items For Action

☐ Board/Superintendent Comments

☒ Adjournment

Item Title: **Adjournment**