

Helena High School

Student/Parent Handbook



“Pride of the Bengals”

2025-2026

WEBSITE:

<http://helenaschools.org/resources/parents/handbooks>

Main Office Phone: (406) 324-2200

Fax: (406) 324-2201

Attendance Phone: (406) 324-2211

Counseling and Career Center Phone: (406) 324-2220

Note:

Policies and procedures may change during the school year.
Changes will be noted on the District website and in school newsletters.

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Welcome to the new School Year, Bengal Family!

We are excited to welcome you to another promising year at Helena High School—one we hope will be filled with growth, opportunity, and success for all.

As we begin the 2025–2026 school year, I’m filled with optimism for what lies ahead. Helena High consistently ranks among the top academic schools in the state, and with that comes incredible opportunities for both students and staff to grow and improve. With new beginnings, bold choices, and the chance to leave your mark, this year has the potential to be one of our best yet.



HHS has a rich history, one that all of us who have graduated from and learned at should be proud of. The graduates of HHS have gone on to accomplish incredible things – US Senators, Governors, Musicians, Engineers, Educators, Inventors – and many other avenues that bring incredible pride to those of us who have taught and learned here. We continue to look forward to what our current students will accomplish and what positive changes they will bring to our community and the world.

At Helena High School, we work purposefully and strategically to meet the needs of all students, individually, regardless of race, class, gender, or ability.

As we have all been made aware recently, the ever-changing landscape of our world makes the importance of a quality education even more important. Our students are incredibly fortunate to have a highly qualified community of educators ready to provide that important preparation every day at Helena High. We encourage families and students to continue to embrace all the opportunities available to them this year, providing the essential skills needed to be college and career ready in a short time.

Please take time to review the contents of this handbook. Strengthening the connection between families and school remains one of our top priorities, and we aim to expand our communication and outreach efforts to keep families informed—not only when challenges arise, but also when students are thriving.

Of course, strong communication is a two-way street. We encourage families to remain actively involved in their child’s education and to stay connected throughout the year. We also urge students to explore their interests, get involved in school activities, and make the most of their high school experience. These four years can be some of the most memorable and formative in their lives—and we’re here to help make that journey as rewarding as possible.

We welcome you to the 2025-2026 school year.

Go Bengals!

Brian Kessler
Principal
Helena High School

Welcome to Helena High School

Our Mission is to Provide a Strong Foundation for Life-long Learning by Nurturing, Challenging, and Guiding all Students Toward Their Maximum Academic, Aesthetic, Physical, Social, and Emotional Potential.



Helena High School Vision

**We envision a school where everyone
(faculty, staff, students, parents, and community):**

- ***Thinks critically, communicates effectively, solves problems, and makes informed choices while maintaining academic integrity.***
- ***Demonstrates the rights and responsibilities of good citizenship including respect toward themselves and others regardless of differences.***
 - ***Becomes an active collaborative life-long learner.***
 - ***Is physically and emotionally safe and healthy.***
 - ***Takes responsibility for his/her own actions.***
- ***Recognizes achievement and success specific to a person's highest potential.***
- ***Develops creative expression and individual talents through a variety of venues.***
 - ***Is technologically literate and globally minded.***
- ***Encourages and supports the school community.***

Helena Public Schools

Vision

Helena Public Schools foster dynamic educational experiences that prepare all students for life.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Helena Public Schools is to challenge and empower each student to maximize individual potential and become a competent, productive, responsible, caring citizen.

This mission will be supported through the wise use of resources to meet students' needs, regardless of interests and talents. Students, families, educators and the community are committed to sharing the responsibility for creating a student-centered educational community that acknowledges learning as a life-long process.

Guiding Principles

- Each student enters school healthy and learns about and practices a healthy lifestyle.
- Each student learns in an intellectually challenging environment that is physically and emotionally safe for students and adults.
- Each student is actively engaged in learning and is connected to the school and broader community.
- Each student has access to personalized learning and to qualified, caring adults.
- Each graduate is prepared for success in college or further study and for employment in a global environment.

Board of Trustees

Determining, with the community, the major directions and purposes of public education is a responsibility of the local Board of Trustees assisted by the personnel of Helena School District No. 1.

Jennifer McKee (Chair) Jennifer Walsh (Vice-Chair)
Janet Armstrong Siobahn Hathhorn
Rachel Robison Linda Cleatus
Jenny Murnane-Butcher Kay Satre

High School Student Representatives

Brock Gardipee - HHS
Delaney Lynch - CHS

Superintendent

Mr. Rex M. Wertz

ADMINISTRATORS/COUNSELORS

Mr. Brian Kessler Principal
Mrs. Julie TeNyenhuus Assistant Principal – Student Management A - K
Mr. Ryan Swenson Assistant Principal – Student Management L – Z
Mr. Aaron Sieminski, Counselor A - G
Mrs. Ellaina Staldine, Counselor H - N
Mr. Joe Michaud, Counselor O – Z



Holiday and Student Dismissal Dates

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July 3 & 4 District Closed

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

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

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

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

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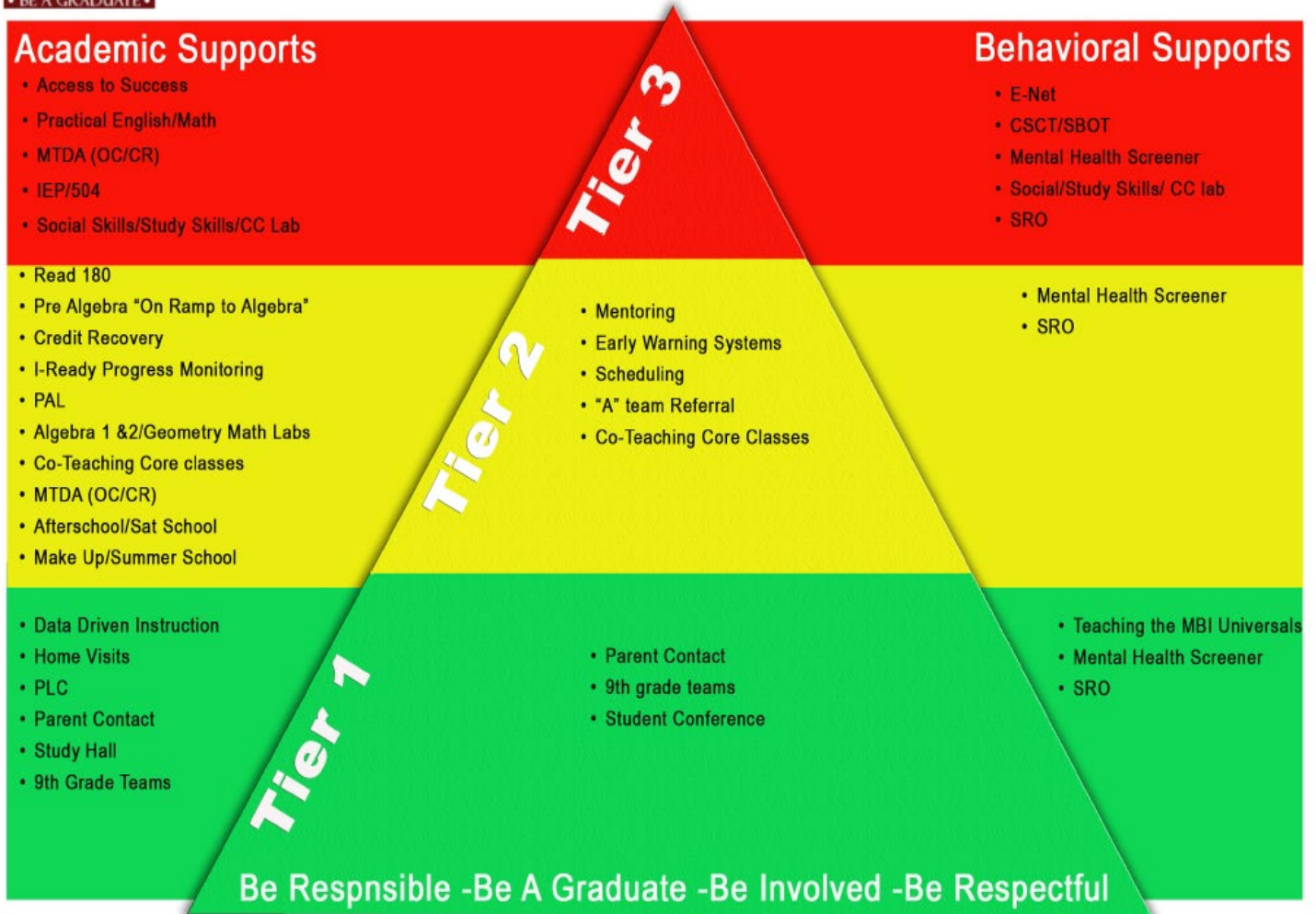
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Trustees Approved on 2/11/2025



Helena High School Multi-Tiered Systems of Support MTSS



POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORT MATRIX

Positive behavior support is a school-wide approach to support and teach expected student and staff behavior. All HHS staff and students will use the matrix on a daily basis to learn and practice social behaviors that are conducive to a positive school climate. This chart is a teaching tool for the HHS community. Everyone in the wider HHS community will benefit from the 4 – B's of the positive choices outlined in this matrix.

Bengal Expectations	School-Wide Norms: Expectations in the Setting/Context					
	1. Classroom/Study Area	2. Common Areas: Lobby, Hallways, Bathrooms, Library, Courtyard	3. Cafeteria / Catty Shack	4. Parking Lot	5. Activities	6. Off Campus
B_e Responsible	•Be an active learner •Be on time to every class every day •Come to class prepared •Challenge yourself to do your best •Ask for help appropriately •Use technology appropriately •Manage time well •Develop effective study habits	•Follow dress code •Recognize kind acts •Walk on the right side of the hallway •Move off to the side when stopping •Be mindful of opening doors •Assist others •Use good hygiene	•Pick up after yourself •Wait patiently in line	•Park in designated areas with parking permit displayed •Throw trash away in garbage cans •Report any damages to vehicles or equipment to the main office •Be mindful of your safety as well as others'	•Attend school activities and events •Get involved	•Be a quality ambassador for HHS •Make positive choices •Follow electronic device policies and laws
B_e Respectful	•On task •Embrace tolerance / diversity •Keep area clean •Take care of equipment (supplies, technology, etc.) •Be attentive, courteous, and polite •Use appropriate, positive language •Follow classroom procedures	•Preserve HHS property and equipment •Report harassment and bullying •Take responsibility for your actions •Use technology appropriately / follow electronic device expectations •Use appropriate language •Maintain personal boundaries	•Put trash in appropriate place •Encourage others to pick up after themselves •Use good Manners •Tolerate differences in others •Value diversity	•Value others and others' property •Follow traffic laws and speed limits •Adhere to city ordinance regarding cell phones	•Foster school spirit •Support each other •Encourage each other •Display good sportsmanship	•Represent HHS well at community events •Be considerate of our world and community •Foster healthy relationships with students from other schools
B_e Involved	•Create authentic work •Encourage peers •Develop positive mental attitude •Cooperate with others •Actively pursue knowledge	•Have positive and encouraging social interactions •Welcome all students and guests •Help end harassment and bullying	•Clean up after yourself and others	•Park in designated areas	•Participate in extra-curricular activities •Display a quality image HHS •Promote positive social interactions	•Reach out to our community through service learning •Wear Bengal attire •Demonstrate good citizenship
B_e a Graduate	•Plan for the future •Take pride in your work •Take ownership of your education •Actively pursue personal educational goals	•Dress appropriately – high school is your job •Advocate for yourself •Utilize your resources (library, counselors, teachers, labs, etc.)	•Exhibit lifelong nutritional habits and good manners	•Leave high school with a clean traffic record	•Positively support HHS •Give your best effort	•Reach out to our feeder schools to include those students in the HHS family •Practice healthy habits / get sleep!

Helena High School Curricular Student Groups and Organization

Curricular Student Groups and Organizations

The Board of Trustees authorizes the administration to approve and recognize curricular student clubs or organizations in a manner consistent with Board policy and administrative procedure. Curricular student clubs are those approved student clubs that directly relate to the body of courses offered by the school. The name of the curricular student clubs must reflect a direct link to a district adopted curriculum. Curricular student clubs that are recognized by the District are permitted to use District facilities, use the District's name, a District school's name, or a District school's team name or any logo attributable to the District. Curricular student groups and organizations may raise and deposit funds with the District.

A student group wanting to start or maintain a curricular club or organization must submit an application (provided) to the building administrator and it must contain the following information:

1. The organization's name and purpose.
2. The portion of the curriculum that is the basis of the club. This step is required for consideration as a curricular 3. club. Applications that do not satisfy this step may be permitted to meet at the school as a non-curricular student group.
3. The school or district staff member designated to serve as the group's advisor.
4. The rules and procedures (bylaws) under which the curricular group will operate.
5. A statement that the membership will adhere to applicable Board policies and administration procedures.

When a new curricular student club or organization is approved by the school's administration the school bookkeeper will be notified so that any funds raised for the club's operations can be managed and aligned with the District's financial practices.

Approved curricular clubs and organizations may appear in the student handbook, the school yearbook, the school web site, other appropriate print and digital publications and may participate in school activity fairs. Approved curricular student clubs and organizations may also have limited access as designated by the administration to distribute messages through official communications of the district (e.g. intercom announcements, district newsletters, group emails, etc.)

Student Service Clubs

A student-led service group wanting to start or maintain a service club or organization must submit an application (provided) to the building administrator and it must contain the following information:

1. The organization's name and purpose.
2. A clear description of the service provided to the students, staff and / or community. This step is required for consideration as a service club. Applications that do not satisfy this step may be permitted to meet at the school as a non-curricular student group.
3. A description of all service requirements and fundraising activities which must support the club's efforts to provide for the betterment of the students, school, staff and community.
4. A description of any required service hours and how those hours are determined.
5. The school or district staff member designated to serve as the group's advisor.
6. The rules and procedures (bylaws) under which the service group will operate.
7. A statement that the membership will adhere to applicable Board policies and administration procedures.

Approved service clubs and organizations may appear in the student handbook, the school yearbook, the school web site, other appropriate print and digital publications and may participate in school activity

fairs. Approved curricular student clubs and organizations may also have limited access as designated by the administration to distribute messages through official communications of the district (e.g. district newsletters, group emails, etc.)

Non-Curricular Student Groups

Student-led and initiated groups that do not meet the requirements to be an approved curricular student club or student service club as described shall be designated as a non-curricular student group. Non-curricular student groups include any student group that does not directly related to the body of courses and classes offered by the District but has a regular meeting schedule and established operational structure. These student meetings must be supervised by an adult. Employees of the District that are present at a non-curricular student group meetings must only serve in a supervisory capacity.

Meeting is defined as a gathering of a group of students for the purpose of discussing group beliefs or engaging in group operations. An event that does not meet this definition will be required to comply with the “Community Use of District Facilities” policy and procedure.

Non-curricular student groups wishing to conduct a meeting within this limited forum are subject to the following fair opportunity criteria, which shall be uniformly administered consistent with 20 U.S. Code §4071:

1. All non-curricular student group meetings shall be voluntary.
2. There shall be no sponsorship of meetings by the District or its agents or employees.
3. Any HPS employees of the District that are present at religious meetings must be present only in a supervisory and non-participatory capacity.
4. All meetings must not materially or substantially interfere with the orderly conduct of educational activities within the District.
5. Non-school persons may not direct, conduct, or attend activities of the non-curricular student groups.

Non-curricular student groups may post notice of gatherings in accordance with Board Policy. Non-curricular student groups MAY be authorized by the school administration to have the name of the school appear as part of their group’s name. Logos attributable to the school or District, the District’s name, or the school’s team name or mascot may NOT be used by a non-curricular student group. The permission to post meeting notices or use the school name does not constitute sponsorship of the group by the District or school.

Informal Student Gatherings

Students are permitted to informally gather at the school in accordance with Board policy. Informal gatherings of students are not permitted to use the District’s name, a school’s name, or a District school’s team name or mascot or any logo attributable to the District. Informal student groups are not allowed to raise and deposit funds within the District. Informal student gatherings may not post notices, make announcements, or post or distribute any other materials in accordance with Board policy.

Informal Student Gatherings/Groups will need to comply with the “Community Use for District Facilities” policy and procedures and may need to fill out a facilities use form to secure meeting space and time.

Parent Permission to Participate

Parent/guardian permission is required for a student to participate in a school club and/or extracurricular activity. Parents also have the right to withdraw their child from any club or extracurricular activity.

A student attending a nonpublic school or home school that meets the requirements under MCA § 20-5-109 may participate in extracurricular activities offered by Helena School District subject to the student's eligibility as set out in **the Student Activities Handbook**. The student's academic eligibility must be verified by the head administrator of the nonpublic school or educator providing the student instruction in the home school as verified by the principal. Parental permission must be obtained for the student to participate in the extracurricular activity.

SEE: Club Application Form on Page 116 .

SEE: Authorization to Participate Form on Page 117.

Other Club/Sports

Band.....	Mr. Hollow
Basketball, Boys.....	Mr. Day
Basketball, Girls.....	Mr. Dudek
Bengal Bowling Club	Ms. Johnson
Bengalettes.....	Ms. Sayler
Cheerleading	Ms. Wilmot
Chorus.....	Ms. Steele
Cross Country, Boys.....	Mr. Gilbert
Cross Country, Girls.....	Mr. Zentz
Football.....	Mr. Broadhead
Golf, Boys and Girls.....	Mr. Shepherd
Latin Club.....	Mrs. Richmond
MBI.....	Mr. Hussey
Math Club.....	Mrs. Potuzak
Nugget (newspaper).....	Mr. Scruggs
Orchestra.....	Mr. Cleary
Soccer, Boys.....	Mr. Straub
Soccer, Girls.....	Mr. Hunter Terry
Softball.....	Mr. Schulte
Speech & Debate.....	Mrs. Hermanson
Swimming.....	TBD
Tennis.....	Ms. Reibe
Track, Boys.....	Mr. Garza
Track, Girls.....	Mr. Zentz
Volleyball.....	Mrs. Day
Wrestling.....	Mr. Bogard
Yearbook.....	Ms. Walsh



TIME SCHEDULES

Daily Time Schedule

Period 0.....	7:25 - 8:15
Period 1.....	8:20 - 9:10
Period 2.....	9:15 - 10:05
Announcements and Nutrition Break.....	10:05 - 10:10
Period 3.....	10:15 - 11:05
Period 4.....	11:10 - 12:00

Lunch.....	12:00 - 12:35
Period 5.....	12:35 - 1:25
Period 6.....	1:30 - 2:20
Period 7	2:25 - 3:15

Assembly Schedule – unless otherwise scheduled

Period 0	7:25 – 8:15
Period 1	8:20 – 9:02
Period 2	9:07 – 9:49
ASSEMBLY	10:00 – 10:50
Period 3	10:55 – 11:37
Period 4	11:42 – 12:24
Lunch.....	12:24 – 12:59
Period 5	12:59 – 1:41
Period 6	1:46 – 2:28
Period 7	2:33 – 3:15

Professional Development

Monday Schedule: (Early Release)

Period 0	7:32 - 8:15
Period 1	8:20 - 9:03
Period 2.....	9:08 - 9:51
Announcements & Nutrition Break	9:51 - 9:56
Period 3.....	10:01–10:44
Period 4	10:49 –11:32
Lunch	11:32 –12:11
Period 5	12:11 – 12:54
Period 6	12:59 - 1:42
Period 7	1:47 – 2:30

Semester Test Schedule

First Semester

Wednesday, January 21, 2026

Thursday, January 22, 2026

Friday, January 23, 2026

Second Semester

Monday, June 8, 2026

Tuesday, June 9, 2026



1st Day	Period 0	8:20 - 9:40
	Period 1	9:55 -11:15

Lunch 11:15 -11:50
 Period 2 11:50 -1:10
 Make up tests..... 1:25 - 2:45
2nd Day Period 3 8:20 -9:40
 Period 4 9:55 -11:15
 Lunch 11:15 -11:50
 Period 5 11:50 -1:10
 Make up tests..... 1:25 - 2:45

3rd Day Period 6 8:20 -9:40
 Period 7 9:55 -11:15
 Lunch 11:15 -11:50
 Make up tests 11:50 -2:45

Students must take exams when scheduled. Students may only reschedule exam with prior permission from Helena High School Administration. Make up tests will only be given with medical documentation of need.

Senior Semester Test Schedule for Second Semester

Semester 2 Testing Scheduling Option 3		
9-Jun		
<u>Period</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Minutes</u>
0	8:20-9:35	75
1	9:40-10:55	75
2	11:00-12:15	75
Lunch	12:15-12:50	35
3	12:55-2:10	75
Make-Up	2:15-3:20	65
10-Jun		
<u>Period</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Minutes</u>
4	8:20-9:35	75
5	9:40-10:55	75
6	11:00-12:15	75
Lunch	12:15-12:50	35
7	12:55-2:10	75
Make-Up	2:15-3:20	65

Graduation – Saturday, June 6, 2026

SENIOR TESTS WILL BE TAKEN DURING THE REGULARLY SCHEDULED CLASS TIMES.

Report Cards

Report cards will be emailed after the completion of the first three quarters. Fourth quarter report cards will be mailed home a week after the end of the school year. Students who have fines on their records will receive report cards marked “fines owed”.

Quarter Dates

The Quarter ending dates for the 2025-2026 school year are:

First Quarter	October 31, 2025
Second Quarter	January 23, 2026
Third Quarter	March 27, 2026
Fourth Quarter	June 9, 2026

Midterm Dates

First Quarter	September 26, 2025
Second Quarter	December 5, 2025
Third Quarter	February 25, 2026
Fourth Quarter	May 6, 2026

Where Can Students Go for Help or Solutions

• Absences & Passes	Attendance Office
• Appointments (Medical / Dental)	Nurse's Office / Attendance Office
• Athletics / Activities / Sports	Main Office
• Bulletin (Daily)	School Web Site & Main Office
• Career Information	Counseling Office / Career Center
• Change of Address, Phone, Email	Main Office
• Club Information	Main Office or Career Center
• College Information	Counseling Office / Career Center
• First Aid – Health Issues	Nurses Office/Main Office
• Graduation Requirements	Counseling Office
• Lost and Found	Main Office
• School Supplies	Counseling Office
• Student Government	Main Office
• Student Identification Card	Main Office
• Suicide Concerns	Counseling Office
• Tardiness	Attendance Office
• Textbooks	Main Office and Teacher
• Tickets for School Events	Main Office
• Transcripts	Main Office / Parchment

INTRODUCTION:

If you are new to our school, WELCOME! If you are returning, we're glad you are back.

This High School Student/Parent Handbook contains information that students and parents are likely to need during the 2025-26 school year.

The handbook is organized alphabetically under each major topic:

- School Site Specific Information
- General Information
- Academic Information
- Extra and Co-Curricular Activities
- Student Rights, Policies and Procedures
- Student Responsibilities and Conduct Codes
- Other Policies, Information, Guidelines
- Forms

Throughout the handbook, the term the student's parent is used to refer to the parents, legal guardian, or other person who has agreed to assume school-related responsibility for a student; the term Superintendent is used to refer to the Superintendent or his/her designee; the term principal is used to refer to the principal or his/her designee.

This Student/Parent Handbook is designed to align with Helena Board of Trustees policy. Please be aware that this document is updated annually, while policy adoption and revision are ongoing processes. Therefore, any changes in policy that affect student handbook provisions will be made available to students and parents through newsletters, the District website and/or other communications. These changes will generally supersede provisions found in this handbook that have been made obsolete by newly adopted policy.

Please note that references to policy are included to help parents confirm current Board policy. The District's Board Policies are available at <http://helenaschools.org/board-of-trustees/policies/>.

In case of conflict between Board policy and any provisions of student handbooks, the provisions of Board policy that were most recently adopted by the Board are to be followed.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Access to Students during School Hours

The District recognizes its responsibility for the proper care of students during school hours, as a result non-school personnel shall not have access to students during the instructional day except as permitted by statute.

Certain officials from various governmental agencies may have limited access to the records without prior consent by the parents or student (over 18 years of age). Disclosure to these governmental agencies may be done under some of the following circumstances:

- The District may grant access to or release information from student records to employees or officials of the District or the Montana State Board of Education, provided a current, legitimate educational interest is shown.
- The District may grant access to or release information from student records without parental consent or notification to any person, for the purpose of research, statistical reporting, or planning, provided that no student or parent can be identified from the information released, and the person to whom the information is released signs an affidavit agreeing to comply with all applicable statutes and rules pertaining to school student records.
- The District will grant access to or release information from any student record as specifically required by federal or state statute.
- The District may release student records or information in connection with an emergency, without parental consent, if the knowledge of such information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other persons. The Superintendent or Principal will make this decision, taking into consideration the nature of the emergency, the seriousness of the threat to the health and safety of the student or other persons, the need for such records to meet the emergency, and whether the persons to whom such records are released are in a position to deal with the emergency.
- The District may disclose student records or information to the youth court and law enforcement authorities, pertaining to violations of the Montana Youth Court Act or criminal laws by the student.
- The District will comply with an *ex parte* order requiring it to permit the U.S. Attorney General or designee to have access to a student's school records without notice to or consent of the student's parent.
- The District may disclose student records in a court proceeding where the parent is a party to an action involving child abuse or neglect or dependency matters without parental consent or notification if ordered to make this disclosure.
- The District may disclose student records to caseworkers or other Child Protective Services representatives when DPHHS/CPS is legally responsible for the care and protection of the student without notification or consent of the parent.

The District forwards a student's records on request and without prior parental consent to a school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. Records are also released in accordance with court order or lawfully issued subpoena. Unless the subpoena is issued for law enforcement purposes and the subpoena orders that its contents, existence, or the information sought not be disclosed, the District will make a reasonable effort to notify the parent or eligible student in advance of compliance.

Parental consent is required to release the records in most circumstances. When the student reaches 18 years of age, only the student has the right to consent to release of records.

The District charges a nominal fee for copying records; however, no parent or student will be precluded from copying information because of financial hardship. An access log will also be maintained for each record which details those individuals accessing the records and their legitimate interest in the records.

All contact between the school and the police department or social service workers on matters involving students shall be made through the administrative office. The District encourages police and social service workers to talk to a student away from the school. Law enforcement should only be allowed to conduct an interview in the school if they can show special circumstances exist or if the interview is at the request of a school official. Law enforcement must comply with all legal requirements regarding notification of parents and consent prior to interviewing students. In the event the student's parent cannot be present, a school official shall observe the meeting.

Social service workers may be permitted to interview students at school pursuant to Montana law. In the event the social worker declines to notify the parent, a school official may observe the meeting.

If the police have a warrant or probable cause for the student's arrest, they must be permitted to arrest the student; however, whenever possible, the arrest should be conducted in the principal's office out of view of other students. A social worker may take custody of a student upon presentation to the District of a court order granting the social worker such power, or under the provisions of § 41-3-301, MCA.

Release to Custodial Parent/Guardian

A student may be released to a custodial parent during the instructional day. When in doubt as to custodial rights, the District will rely on the most recent information available in the student's records. The District will not release a student to a non-custodial parent without contacting the custodial parent. Prior written permission from the custodial parent is required before releasing a student into the custody of a previously unauthorized adult, unless an emergency situation justifies a waiver.

[See: Board Policy 3045 - Access to and Release of a Student during School Hours.](#)

Annual Asbestos Notification

In the past, asbestos was used extensively in building materials because of its insulating, sound absorbing, and fire retarding capabilities. All Helena School District buildings constructed before the late 1970s contain some level of asbestos. Intact and undisturbed asbestos materials generally do not pose a health risk. Asbestos materials, however, can become hazardous when, due to damage or deterioration over time, they release fibers. If the fibers are inhaled, they can lead to health problems, since as cancer and asbestosis.

In 1986, Congress passed the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) which requires schools to be inspected to identify any asbestos containing building materials. Suspected asbestos-containing building materials are located, sampled (or assumed) and rated according to condition and potential hazard. Every three years, Helena Public School District has conducted a reinspection to determine whether the condition of the known or assumed asbestos containing building materials (ACBM) has changed and to make recommendations on managing or removing the ACBM. At the last reinspection conducted during September 2020, all materials listed in the Management Plan as asbestos containing (or assumed to be asbestos containing) were inspected and recertified.

The law further requires an asbestos management plan to be in place by July 1989. Helena Public School District has developed a plan, as required, which has been continually updated. The plan has several ongoing requirements: publish a notification on management plan availability and the status of activities; educate and train its employees about asbestos and how to deal with it; notify short-term or temporary workers on the locations of the asbestos containing building materials; post warning labels in routine maintenance areas where asbestos was previously identified or assumed; follow set plans and procedures designed to minimize the disturbance of asbestos containing building materials; and survey the condition of these materials every six months to assure that they remain in good condition.

Since the Fall of 2016 asbestos containing building materials have been removed, encapsulated, or enclosed in the following buildings: Helena High School, Capital High School, C. R. Anderson Middle School, Helena Middle School, Hawthorne Elementary School, Rossiter Elementary School, Four Georgians Elementary School, Warren Elementary School, Broadwater Elementary School, Smith Elementary School, Jefferson Elementary School, Kessler Elementary School, Lincoln School. During the next year, we plan to continue asbestos abatement across the District.

It is the intention of Helena Public School District to comply with all federal and state regulations controlling asbestos and to take whatever steps are necessary to ensure students and employees a healthy and safe environment in which to learn and work. You are welcome to review a copy of the asbestos management plan at the District Facility office at 1201 Boulder Ave during regular business hours. The Facilities Director is the District's designed asbestos program coordinator, and all inquiries regarding asbestos plan and asbestos-related issues should be directed to the Facilities Director at 324.1720.

Attendance

The philosophy of the Helena Public Schools is that regular school attendance is essential for all students, and that schools will work cooperatively with students and parents toward that end.

It is the responsibility of all students to maintain prompt, regular attendance in all classes in which he or she is officially enrolled. Students need to be familiar with the procedures describing absences, tardies, and make-up work outlined in the "Student Responsibilities and Code of Conduct" section of this handbook.

A telephone call, a written note or electronic communication from a parent is necessary when a student is absent or late for any reason. Notes shall be given to the attendance secretary, and teachers shall be given a list of students to be admitted. ([See: Board Policy 3015 – Attendance and Truancy](#))

The District has implemented an automated attendance notification system. Parents of students with an unverified absence or absences will be notified by the automated system via voice and email. Parents will be asked to contact the school and verify their student's absence.

If you are going to be absent, please notify the Attendance Office at least 24 hours and prior to the date of absence. If you are unable to notify in person you can call the Helena High Attendance Office at 324-2211.

Attendance Areas

Grades 9-12	Helena High	Capital High
	Bryant	Broadwater
	Central	Four Georgians
	Jefferson	Jim Darcy
	Smith	Rossiter
	Warren	Kessler
	Helena Middle	C.R. Anderson
		Birdseye Trinity
		Wolf Creek

Students living in the named attendance area are assigned to attend the high school listed above.

1. Any student whose family moves to a neighborhood outside the designated school attendance area or who wishes to enroll in a school outside the designated attendance area must obtain a boundary exception form from the home school.
2. If the student is involved in activities governed by the Montana High School Association he or she must move within six months of the parental relocation to maintain eligibility. If the student is not involved in activities under the jurisdiction of the MHSA, that student may finish the school year in the presently enrolled school before transferring. Any student who changes schools in the district who is involved in activities governed by the MHSA must meet eligibility requirements established by the MHSA.
3. Transfers will be allowed at semester breaks only.

Boundary Exceptions

These will be considered prior to the opening day of the school year and prior to the start of the second semester. All students requesting a boundary exception must complete a boundary exception form. All 9 – 12 grade students who are requesting exceptions should initially register in the assigned attendance area.

Bus Services

Helena Public Schools has elected to provide student transportation services as allowed by the Montana Codes Annotated (MCA 20-10-121). The District's Transportation Department strives to provide safe, reliable and professional transportation services to its students. The primary mode of transportation offered is on school busses that are operated by First Student, a private vendor under a contract managed by the District's Transportation Department. This section of the Student Handbook is designed to provide an overview and reference information for the bus services offered. For information regarding bus behavior conduct guidelines and consequences please refer to the section of the handbook entitled "Student Responsibility and Codes of Conduct – Section 9.0". Do not hesitate to contact the District's Transportation Department if you have questions or require additional information. Our contact information is:

Transportation Department/Helena Public Schools
3020 Big Sky Loop Helena, Montana 59602 Phone: 324-2100
Email: transportation@helenaschools.org
Web Site: <https://helenaschools.org/departments/transportation/>

Busing Eligibility

A student is eligible for district-provided transportation if they:

1. Resides in an attendance area and the student's residence is greater than 3 miles from the school for high school students or outside the established walk zone for K-8 students as defined for each individual school's attendance area. Bussing eligibility walk zone information may be reviewed on the district's website (<https://helenaschools.org/departments/transportation/>)
2. Has an Individual Education Plan (IEP – Special Needs) that includes transportation as a related service in the IEP.

A student is ineligible for district-provided transportation if they*:

1. Lives less than 3 miles from the school of attendance for high school students or within a K-8 walk zone.
2. Resides in a District that does not have an applicable transportation agreement with the Helena Public Schools.
3. Resides beyond his/her school's attendance boundary as the result of a Parent Choice Boundary Exception, regardless of mileage to the school of attendance.
4. Has been temporarily placed in a District program less than 15 days.
5. Loses riding privileges for discipline reasons.

As defined by MCA 20-10-101(5): "Transportation" means:

- (a) a district's conveyance of a pupil by a school bus between the pupil's legal residence or an officially designated bus stop and the school designated by the trustees for the pupil's attendance; or
- (b) "individual transportation" by which a district is relieved of actually conveying a pupil. Individual transportation may include paying the parent or guardian for conveying the pupil, reimbursing the parent or guardian for the pupil's board and room, or providing supervised correspondence study or supervised home study.

Inclement Weather and Bus Delays or Cancellations

In case of severe weather or other emergencies, official information about school closings will be broadcast on the local radio stations. Information will also be posted on:

The district web site (<https://helenaschools.org/>)

The Transportation department's webpage <https://helenaschools.org/departments/transportation/>,

The Transportation Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/HSD1Transportation/>)

Bright Arrow (formerly School Messenger) and

The Transportation Parent Portal app.

If there are inclement weather delays or canceled bus routes, information will be announced on media outlets through the Lincoln Center Administration Office.

Bus Registration

Bus registration should be completed each school year. Students are not rolled over from one year to the next. All bus registrations will need to be submitted through our Parent Portal App or in-person. For more information on our Parent Portal app, please visit

<https://helenaschools.org/departments/transportation/parent-portal/>.

High School students who reside under the 3 mile limit and Elementary/Middle School students residing within the walk zones prepared for each K-5 and Middle School may request a courtesy ride; however eligibility is determined upon the availability of an established bus route and bus capacity. Bussing for students that do not live within the designated transportation areas shall be provided on a first come - first served basis and are only granted on a case by case basis. Please call the Transportation Department for more information.

Guest Pass - *Tentative*

Students who are not registered riders may ride a bus with a registered bus student as a guest. Students will need to get a temporary pass from the school of their attendance. Students must have a note from a parent that states who they will be riding with, the bus number and the location of the bus stop. The note must be verified by the school and signed off by the principal or designated school official. Students who do not follow the guest pass procedures will not be allowed to ride the school bus.

Bus Routes, Stops and Schedules

The bus stops are created with safety taking precedence over convenience. Bus routes are developed with safety and efficiency as top priorities. Roads must be county or city maintained for buses to traverse them. The district recognizes the travel time on buses extends the day for students. The district strives to minimize the time students must ride the bus. Transfer buses are used to minimize ride times for students given the geographic locations and numbers of school sites the district operates. Bus routes, stops and schedules are approved by the Lewis and Clark County Transportation Committee in June of each year.

Students are recommended to be at the bus stops 5 minutes prior to the scheduled time of arrival. Buses can arrive up to two minutes prior to their scheduled-pickup time. If the bus does not arrive as scheduled (up to 15 minutes late), please call the First Student dispatcher at 227-7400. Afternoon routes may arrive early at their designated stop due to a wide range of circumstances; Monday early outs, lack of student loads, district early releases, etc. The individual students, and their parents, are responsible for the student's behavior and conduct until the student has boarded or departed the bus.

Parent Portal Program

1. Parents may register for a free application to track the location of their student's bus. This application allows parents to see if their bus is running on time.
2. All bus students will be asked to carry a bus card. This card will inform parents when their student's bus stop was picked up, via push notification message.
3. If parents have any questions about Parent Portal, they should contact the Helena Public Schools Transportation Office.

Transportation of School Related and Non-School Related Items

Contraband, weapons, flammable liquids, animals or other dangerous, objectionable or non-school related items shall not be transported on a school bus. School related items transported on the bus shall be small enough to be transported on the student's lap, adjacent seat or under the seat of the bus. School related items that would block exit aisles or extend above the back of the seat will not be transported on the school bus. If you are unsure if an item is allowed, please contact the Transportation Department prior to the day your child plans on transporting the material or object.

Bus Behavior Conduct Guidelines and Consequences

Each transported student has the right to a safe and enjoyable ride to and from school that is free from intimidation, threat or harassment. Good conduct of all transported students while waiting for the school bus and while traveling to and from school is primary for a safe and enjoyable ride for all students.

The School District has established student behavior procedures that apply to all transported students while on the school bus and while in school bus loading or unloading areas. The bus and the bus stop are extensions of the school day. Each individual student, as well as their parents, or guardians, is responsible for the behavior of that student while on the school bus and in school bus loading or unloading areas.

Transportation service is a privilege that is granted by the district to eligible students and their parents or guardians and is contingent upon proper behavior according to established district policies, rules and standards. A student's eligibility to ride the school bus may be suspended or revoked for a violation of school bus safety or conduct rules and standards, or for violation of any other law or policy governing student conduct on a school bus. Revocation of a student's bus riding privileges is not considered an exclusion, expulsion or suspension from school. However, unacceptable conduct on the school bus may result in suspension or expulsion from school. It shall be the responsibility of the parent or guardian to transport students to and from school when bus riding privileges are revoked. The district will not provide alternative transportation to a student whose transportation privileges have been suspended or revoked. (*Decisions regarding special education students will take into account related disabilities and individual education requirements pertaining to transportation).

Suspension or expulsion from school may also result in suspension from district sponsored transportation services.

It is important to note that students may also be suspended or expelled from riding any district sponsored transportation services for conduct violations occurring on school district buses even if they are still being allowed to attend school.

Corrective Disciplinary Action

Minimum Corrective Action: Driver identifies the unacceptable behavior and informs the student of the intent to complete a conduct report if the behavior continues.

Maximum Corrective Action: Unlimited transportation services suspension, school suspension, expulsion, and/or police notification.

Bus Seatbelt Procedures

It is the goal of the Helena Public Schools Transportation Dept. to provide the safest student transportation system available. The District requires that all students riding the school district buses comply with state law regarding the use of seatbelts. Students six years old or younger that are less than 60 pounds are required to utilize child seats and wear five point safety harnesses. Students who may require assistance in using seatbelts should ask the bus driver for help so that all students are safely belted in their seat before the bus is put in motion. Drivers will announce prior to the bus leaving that each student needs to be in their assigned seat and seatbelts fastened. Students refusing to use seatbelts in a legal and safe manner will be subject to school district disciplinary actions. Repeated refusal to wear seatbelts will result in suspended riding privileges from the bus.

Helena Public Schools Transportation Video and Audio

All buses are equipped with audio and video capabilities. The school district will only retain approximately 2 weeks audio and video storage history. The Helena School District does not guarantee the working operation of the surveillance system and therefore cannot guarantee the storage of up to 2 weeks of surveillance storage. Individuals who would like to view information pertaining to their child should make an appointment with the Helena Public Schools Transportation Department. Copies of bus video will not be released except under the request of court ordered subpoena.

Transportation Questions

Parents having any questions or requiring additional information are encouraged to contact the Helena School District Transportation Department at 324-2100.

Change of Residential or Mailing Address, Email Address &/or Telephone Number through PowerSchool Parent Portal.

Any change of residence or mailing address, email address or telephone number during the school year must be reported to the office immediately. The PowerSchool Parent Portal allows you to update this information. Once you enter the information, it is received by the office and confirmed.

In order to receive electronic communications from the office and teachers, please also report any changes in parent email addresses.

Children of Military Families

It is the intention of the District to remove barriers to educational success imposed on children of military families transitioning to and from school because of frequent moves and/or deployment of a parent on active duty in the regular Armed Forces, National Guard, or Reserves.

In the event that a child of a military family seeks to enroll in the District, the District shall enroll and appropriately place the student as quickly as possible based upon information in the unofficial educational records pending receipt of the official records.

The District shall not charge tuition in relation to a child of a military family transferring into the District who has been placed in the care of a noncustodial parent or other person through a special power of attorney so long as that noncustodial parent or other person resides within the District.

[See: Board Policy: 3022 Children of Military Families](#)

Family Night

The Helena Board of Trustees has designated each Wednesday evening during the school year as Family Night.

The purpose of this evening is to allow students the opportunity to participate in family or community-based activities without scheduled conflicts from schools. In order to promote the concept, the Board requires that there be no school-sponsored activities on Wednesday night that last beyond 7:00 p.m.

An exception may occur if MHSA sanctioned events have to be rescheduled due to unforeseen issues.

Foodservice: School Meal Changes / Free and Reduced Lunch Applications / School Breakfast and Lunch Program

To encourage a pleasant atmosphere, students are expected to be courteous and please:

1. Deposit all lunch litter in wastebaskets.
2. Return all trays and utensils to the dishwashing area.
3. Leave tables and floors clean for those who follow.
4. Take care of all new equipment and tables; there is no money to replace equipment that is vandalized.
5. Move away from the building. This is to keep the noise down for classes in session.
6. Do not return into the building and hallways until the lunch period is over. Remember other classes are in session and we need you to be quiet as you go to your classes.
7. Do not play games that include tackling or piling on.
8. Keep your feet and hands to yourself.

School Lunch and Breakfast

The school breakfast and lunch prices for the 2025-2026 school year are as follows:

- Breakfast (9-12) - Student - \$2.00
- Lunch (9-12) - \$3.10 per lunch
- Milk - \$0.60 per half pint
- Adult Breakfast - \$3.50 per breakfast
- Adult Lunch - \$5.00 per lunch

High Schools offer the "Taste 4" meal program. This program features entrees from around the globe, and a variety of fresh made sauces to mix and add flavors to the meal. We have a web-based point of sale system that has many features including; family meal plans, instant updates, real time customer purchase history, a pay online purchase option and Smart Snack compliant a la cart program to offer healthy options in our off program area

Additionally, there will be several separate stations at lunch that will include rotating menus such as the; Asian bar, taco bar, wrap bar, specialty salad bar, pasta bar, potato bar, and many others. Each of these bars will be a full service bar with all the extras at no additional cost other than just the price of a lunch. Milk, fresh fruit, fresh vegetables and salad are also included with every meal, and students can eat as many fruits and vegetables as they like from the offering bar.

Every parent/guardian may have a FREE lunch and a FREE breakfast, with their child(ren) each month during the school year. The School Food Service Program wants to encourage parents to be a part of their student's meals so they can experience the variety of nutritious options available every day to students at school. This offer does not include special events and is not valid on special days like BBQ days or Open Houses.

The School Food Service Program is continuing the "Pay On-Line Program" for your student's food service account needs. You can go to the web site, www.mymealtime.com. You will need to set up an account, with the user as yourself (not the student). You will need to know your child(ren)'s student ID number. You will

be able to use a credit card to put money into your child's accounts. All additional processing fees still apply at the time of the deposit, and the process will take about 48 hours to get into your child(ren)s account in each school.

If you need assistance paying for your child's meal costs, now is the time to apply for the Free and Reduced Lunch program. Visit <https://helenaschools.org/departments/food-services/> to get started.

When you apply for meal assistance, you not only help your family, but you help your school receive more funding for important student services like textbooks and math and literacy programs.

If you're concerned about paying your child's meal costs, please apply. If you have questions please contact your school office. By signing up, you feed your family and support your school.

Please keep track and take care of negative balances for your students before they graduate, negative balances can affect your student's ability to receive their diploma. The school district cannot just write off any charges that were made for your child from the day the start school to the day they graduate.

****Applications for free and reduced-priced lunches are available at each school****

Foster Care

Children in foster care have the right to educational stability and the same opportunities for academic success as their peers. "Foster care" refers to 24-hour substitute care provided to children placed outside their home by a child welfare agency, including placements such as foster family homes, group homes, residential facilities, emergency shelters, and pre-adoptive homes.

The District is committed to ensuring that students in foster care remain in their school of origin—defined as the school the child was attending at the time of placement—unless it is determined not to be in the child's best interest. If a change is necessary, the student will be immediately enrolled in the new school, even if required records are not available at the time of enrollment.

The District will work closely with the child welfare agency to make prompt best-interest decisions and coordinate transportation arrangements to support the child's continued education.

The foster care point of contact for Helena Public Schools is Kaitlyn Hess (khess1@helenaschools.org).

[See also Board Policy: 3023 Education of Children in Foster Care](#)

GPS and Audio Child Tracking / Monitoring Systems

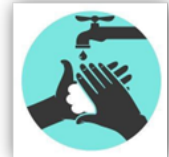
Parents and students are expressly prohibited from using covert means to listen-in or make a recording (audio or video) of any meeting or activity at school. This includes placing recording devices, or other devices with one-or two-way audio communication technology (i.e., technology that allows a person off-site to listen to live conversations and sounds taking place in the location where the device is located), within a student's book bag/backpack, on the student's person or otherwise in an area capable of listening in or recording without express written consent of the Superintendent.

Any requests to place a recording device or other device with one- or two-way audio communication technology within a student's book bag/backpack or on a student's person shall be submitted, in writing, to the Superintendent along with an explanation of why such recording is necessary. The Superintendent or a designee shall notify the parent(s), in writing, whether such request is denied or granted within five (5) school days. Where consent has been given by the Superintendent, the Principal must be given access by the parent to be a school guardian on the device. This will ensure any "Listen-In" feature is disabled during school hours due to privacy concerns.

Health Services

Communicable Diseases

The School Nurse assists school staff and families in the management of communicable disease. This is accomplished through classroom education including proper hand washing and respiratory hygiene, newsletter and in-service communications on health updates, and through the management of disease outbreaks in conjunction with local health department staff.



Per MCA 20-5-405 To protect children from contagious illnesses, students infected with certain diseases are not allowed to come to school while contagious. Parents of a student with a communicable or contagious disease should phone the school nurse or principal. Examples of diseases include Mumps, Measles, Chicken Pox (Varicella), Influenza, Pertussis (Whooping Cough), Coronavirus Disease (Covid)

For more information on MCA 20-5-405, please visit:

https://www.leg.mt.gov/bills/mca/title_0200/chapter_0050/part_0040/section_0050/0200-0050-0040-0050.html

A team of registered, professional school nurses travel between schools as assigned. They are available to students, families and staff for questions, concerns, and information regarding health and safety in the school setting.

The Helena Public Schools Nurses request updated health information annually or anytime there are changes throughout the school year. A link to health forms and the school nurse contact information can be found [here](#).

Students who have health concerns during the day should tell their teacher(s) who may refer them to the school nurse/health office using the guidelines provided by the school nurse.

Illness Protocol

When a student becomes ill but does not require immediate medical help, a determination will be made about whether the student should be sent home (ie. should be temporarily excluded from school). The School Nurse or designated staff member will determine whether the student's illness meets one of the following criteria:

1. Prevents the student from participating comfortably in activities as determined by staff members of the school.
2. Results in a need for care that is greater than staff members can provide without compromising the health and safety of other students. This may include psychological or physical issues affecting academic performance.
3. Poses a risk of spreading disease to others based on the list of specific excludable conditions.
4. Temperature 100.4 or higher
5. Uncontrolled cough or difficulty breathing
6. Vomiting and/or repeated diarrhea
7. Severe headache, especially with fever
8. Red eyes with discolored discharge, and/or pain, and/or itchiness
9. Discolored nasal discharge, especially with fever
10. Severe ear pain
11. Rash accompanied by fever, drainage or blistering
12. Sore throat accompanied by fever, rash or difficulty swallowing

For a complete description of the Helena Public School Illness Protocol, please visit:

<https://helenaschools.org/illness-protocol/>

Immunizations

Vaccines Required for School Attendance, Preschool -12th Grade



VACCINE	PRESCHOOL ¹	KINDERGARTEN - 12 TH GRADE
Haemophilus influenza Type B (Hib)	1 dose (given on or after the 1 st birthday, unless child is older than 59 months) ²	None Needed
Diphtheria, Tetanus, and Pertussis (DTaP, Tdap)	4 doses	4 doses (one dose must be given on or after 4 th birthday) ^{3,4} Plus 1 dose of Tdap (prior to entering 7 th grade) ⁵
Polio (IPV or OPV)	3 doses	3 doses (one dose must be given on or after 4 th birthday) ³
Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (MMR)	1 dose (dose must be given on or after 1 st birthday)	2 doses (first dose must be given on or after 1 st birthday, and spacing between doses is 4 weeks)
Varicella "chickenpox" (Var)	1 dose (dose must be given on or after 1 st birthday) ⁶	2 doses (first dose must be given on or after 1 st birthday, spacing between doses is 12 weeks for children under 13 years, and 4 weeks for those older than 13 years) ^{5,6}

¹Per MCA 20-5-402, a preschool is defined as a facility that provides, on a regular basis and as its primary purpose, educational instruction designed for children 5 years of age or younger and that: (a) serves no child under 5 years of age for more than 3 hours a day; and (b) serves no child 5 years of age for more than 6 hours a day.

²Hib vaccine is not recommended for children older than 59 months.

³When following the ACIP schedule, children will have at least 5 doses of DTaP and 4 doses of polio vaccine.

⁴A pupil 7 years or older who has not completed the DTaP requirement must receive additional doses of Tdap vaccine or Td vaccine to become current in accordance with the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practice (ACIP) recommendations per ARM 37.114.705.

⁵While it is not recommended, if a child younger than 13 years receives their second dose of varicella at an interval of 4 weeks or longer, the dose does **not** need to be repeated.

⁶As of October 1, 2015 pupils are required to have varicella vaccine and all pupils 7th-12th grade must have a Tdap vaccine.

Note: A four-day grace period may apply, as appropriate, per the ACIP recommendations.

Documentation of a valid medical or religious exemption or conditional enrollment may be submitted in lieu of receiving all required vaccines.

Proof of school required vaccinations or exemptions must be provided before:

- kindergarten entry
- 7th grade entry (Tdap booster given after the age of 10)

For more information regarding Montana required vaccines for school entry and exemptions allowed, please visit: [Montana State Statute regarding required immunizations](#).

Immunization Exemptions

Per Montana Code Annotated, parents can file for either a Medical exemption or a Religious exemption. A Medical Exemption is appropriate if a student's health care provider and parent agree that a required vaccination is not appropriate, based on the student's health. A Religious Exemption is appropriate if a vaccine is contrary to the family's religious beliefs. Links for both exemptions can be found below:

[Medical Exemption HES101A](#)

[Religious Exemption HES113](#)

For more information on the immunization exemptions allowed by Montana law, please visit : <https://helenaschools.org/departments/school-nurse-health-services/>

Medication Procedures

In special cases the school nurse, healthcare provider and parents may agree on a plan for administration of medication during school hours. The parent/guardian will bring the pharmacy labeled bottle of medication to school for intake including signature and counting of pills.

Medication administration by family may be needed up to 24 hours after medication intake allowing time for a district school nurse to process the new medication.

Over-the-Counter Medications (OTC)

- Pre K- 8th grade: A licensed health care provider must provide a written order for administration of OTC medication, parent authorization given, and medication provided in original container. Allow up to 24 hours before administration begins for school nurse processing.
- 9th grade -12th grade: may keep a small quantity of non-prescribed, parent recommended OTC medication with them and may self-administer, according to package directions. Parents who want the school to manage OTC medication for their high school student must complete an Authorization for Medication to be Given at School form and provide the medication.

Self-Administration of Emergency Medications

- Students with permission by their health care provider and guardian who have provided the permission form to the school and who have asthma, severe allergies or anaphylaxis may possess and self-administer emergency medication; epinephrine auto-injector, epinephrine nasal spray, oral antihistamine, or asthma inhaler during the school day, during field trips, during school-sponsored events, or while on a school bus.

For more information on medication procedures, please visit: <https://helenaschools.org/medication-procedures/>

Allergies

The Helena School District makes every effort to decrease exposure to allergens, however **we encourage parents of children with life threatening allergies to contact the School Nurse prior to the beginning**

of the school year to work together to develop an Allergy Action Plan. In case of suspected anaphylactic reaction, trained staff may administer stock emergency injectable epinephrine to any student in need thereof on school grounds according to a standing order of a chief medical officer for administration of emergency medications.

Head Lice

Head lice are wingless insects about the size of a sesame seed. They cannot fly, jump, or swim. They are passed from person to person from direct head-to-head contact or, very rarely, by “hitching a ride” on a comb, brush or hat. While they are an anxiety-producing nuisance they do not carry disease. Students with head lice or nits (louse eggs) will not be excluded from school as unnecessary absences directly affect school performance and a child’s opportunity to learn.

If a parent or staff member believes a student has lice, they can contact the School Nurse who will arrange a time to assess the student privately. If live lice or nits are found the student’s parents will be contacted with information about effective treatment options. The student may remain at school until the end of the day.

Classroom wide screenings will not be done as studies indicate that it does not decrease the incidence of head lice, is disruptive to the learning process, and a violation of privacy and confidentiality of the student and their family.

Helena Public Schools nurses educate students regarding lice and how to avoid transmission by decreasing head-to-head contact and not sharing hats, combs, brushes or hair accessories. Parents can help by routinely inspecting their child’s hair for lice. If you are unsure of this process, how to identify a louse, or how to treat an infestation please contact your School Nurse.

For a step-by-step guide for managing head lice at home, refer to: <https://identify.us.com/idmybug/head-lice/head-lice-documents/lice-mgmt-chart-home.pdf>

Health Screenings

Methods for screening may include checklists, observations, and formal instruments as indicated. Parents are notified of any unusual performance or failed screening. Students may be referred for further evaluation by a health care provider.

- **Vision** – School Nurses may screen students in grades K, 1, 3, 5, 8, and students new to Helena School District without screening documentation, students who are referred, and students who are being monitored.
- **Oral Health** – Students in grades 1 and 3 may be screened by local dentists and dental health professionals who volunteer to provide a visual inspection. The School Nurse coordinates the program in each elementary school.
- **Hearing**- School Nurses and School Speech/Language Pathologists may screen students for hearing in K, 1st and 9th grade. Students in other grades may be screened upon referral, if they are without screening documentation, and students who are being monitored. The regional Audiologist may consult with the school nurses regarding referrals and ongoing management.

Homeless Students

In compliance with federal and state laws, the District is committed to supporting students experiencing homelessness by ensuring full access to academic programming and other services for which they qualify. Homeless students will not be separated into distinct schools or programs based on their housing status, nor will they be identified or treated in a stigmatizing manner.

The District will determine school placement based on the best interest of the student. Whenever possible, students will remain in their school of origin, unless it is against the wishes of the parent or guardian. If remaining in the school of origin is not feasible, students will be enrolled in the local school serving the area where they are currently living, as would any other student residing in that zone.

For students who are unaccompanied by a parent or guardian, the District's homeless liaison will support enrollment and placement decisions, taking the student's preferences into account.

Homeless students will be enrolled immediately, even if they are unable to provide typical enrollment documents such as school records, immunization records, proof of residency, or other paperwork. Enrollment will not be delayed due to the lack of these documents.

Students experiencing homelessness will have access to the same services as their peers, including:

- Transportation to and from school
- Special education and related services (if eligible)
- Title I and other academic support programs
- English language development services
- Gifted and talented programs
- Career and technical education
- Pre-kindergarten programs
- Before- and after-school care programs
- School nutrition and meal programs

Homeless students have the right to transportation to and from their school of origin or the school they are currently attending, as determined by the District.

Homework

Homework is a constructive tool in the teaching/learning process when geared to the needs and abilities of students. Purposeful assignments not only enhance student achievement, but also develop self-discipline and associated good working habits. Teachers may give homework to students to aid in the student's educational development. Homework should be an application or adaptation of a classroom experience, and should not be assigned for disciplinary purposes.

In-District Student Transfers

Boundary lines set by the Board of Trustees shall be observed unless an exception is granted through guidelines established by the Superintendent.

Parents requesting a transfer must complete the “*Parent Request Form for K-12 Student In-District Transfer*”. The form must be submitted to the principal of the school serving the area where the family resides. The principal of the school where the student resides will review the student’s records (including but not limited to; grades, academics, and behavior) and will approve or deny the request, make comments and route the form to the principal of the requested school for consideration and approval or denial. If there is a disagreement between principals regarding the request, an explanation will be sent along with the parent’s copy of this request to the Central Administration Office. The Central Administration Office will consider the request, gather further information and render a decision. A copy of the transfer request indicating the final decision will be sent to the parent and the schools. Forms may be picked up at any school office.

Transportation to and from school is the parent’s responsibility.

Latex Balloons

Because of the potential for serious latex-related allergic reactions, as well as the choking hazards associated with latex balloons, only non-latex balloons will be allowed in the school building or on school grounds.

Law Enforcement

Questioning of Students

Law enforcement or social service workers must contact students through the administrative office. Students will not usually be questioned or interviewed by law enforcement or other lawful authorities while at school. When law enforcement officers or other lawful authorities, however, wish to question or interview a student at school or the principal requests that the student be interviewed at school:

- The principal shall verify and record the identity of the officer or other authority.
- If the interview is not at the request of the principal, the principal shall ascertain the authority of law enforcement to question or interview the student at the school. If the interview is by court order or other exigencies exist (concern about loss/damage of evidence, flight from jurisdiction, or health, safety, or welfare of the student or other students or staff), the principal has the discretion to allow the interview to take place. Otherwise, if law enforcement can reasonably interview the student at a time when the student is not in school, the principal may, absent a court order or warrant, deny the request for an immediate interview of a student.
- The principal will make reasonable efforts to notify parents unless the officer produces a court order prohibiting the notification of the parents.

- In the event that a parent cannot be present or cannot be reached, the principal will observe the interview.
- Law enforcement must comply with all legal requirements regarding notification of parents and consent prior to interviewing students.
- Social service workers may be permitted to interview students at a school consistent with Montana law. The principal will observe the meeting if the social service worker declines to notify the parents.

Students Taken into Custody

State law requires the District to permit a student to be taken into legal custody by a law enforcement officer or probation officer to comply with a lawful court order, a warrant for arrest, or a law enforcement determination that probable cause exists for the arrest. To the extent practicable, the arrest should be conducted out of the view of other students in the administration offices. A social service worker may take custody of a student with a lawful court order or under the powers of MCA § 41-3-301.

The principal will immediately notify the Superintendent and will make reasonable attempts to notify a parent unless the officer or official produces a court order prohibiting the notification of the parents. Because the principal does not have the authority to prevent or delay a custody action, notification will most likely be after the fact.

Service of Process

At times, law enforcement may seek to serve a student with a subpoena or other legal documents (i.e., complaint, summons). Absent a court order, the principal has the discretion to determine whether service at school is disruptive to the educational environment. If service is directed by a court or is not disruptive to the educational environment, the principal will make reasonable attempts to contact the parents regarding the service. Where the principal has determined that service would be disruptive to the educational environment, the principal will make a reasonable attempt to coordinate with law enforcement to serve the student when school is not in session. Service on a student will be accomplished out of the view of other students in the administration offices.

Montana Department of Justice Violent & Sexual Offenders Registry

The Montana Department of Justice maintains a Sexual or Violent Offenders Registry that can be reviewed online at (<https://dojmt.gov/sexual-or-violent-offender-registry/>). This website provides the last known residences for these individuals and supplemental information regarding the nature and dates of the crime(s) that caused them to be listed in this registry.

While the district does not track or monitor the individuals that may reside in the vicinity of schools or bus stops, it is our intent to make you aware that this registry information is available to the public. The Montana Department of Justice also provides on-line guidance and educational materials for both Parents and Educators on their website at and we encourage parents and guardians to review this information and familiarize themselves with the resources that are available to help address these situations.

Nonresident Student Enrollment

Beginning with enrollment for the 2025-2026 school year, whenever the extenuating circumstances listed in Section 20-5-321, MCA do not exist and mandatory enrollment of a student who resides outside the District is not required, the District may enroll the nonresident student at the request of the student's parent or guardian as specified in this policy.

The District shall serve children who are residents of the district and nonresident children seeking mandatory enrollment for extenuating circumstances prior to enrolling nonresidents students seeking to apply when extenuating circumstances do not exist.

Applications for enrollment of out-of-district students must be submitted to the District for consideration for enrollment for the fall semester in the subsequent school year no later than June 1; an out-of-district student enrolled before the fall semester shall be considered to be enrolled for the entirety of the school year.

Applications for enrollment of out-of-district students must be submitted to the District for consideration for enrollment for the spring semester in the subsequent school year by November 15. All applications shall be submitted using the form found at Policy 3141F as developed by the Superintendent of Public Instruction. For planning purposes, late applications will be accepted only at the Superintendent or designee's discretion and shall only be considered in extreme and extenuating circumstances.

Nonresident students must reapply for admission each school year. Admission in one school year does not infer or guarantee admission in subsequent years. Nonresident students who were accepted prior to the 2025-2026 school year will be grandfathered but must complete Form 3141F annually and must remain in good standing.

[See: Board Policy: Nonresident Student Enrollment](#)

Parent Rights

All fundamental parental rights are exclusively reserved to the parent of a child without obstruction or interference by a governmental entity in accordance with state and federal law (including without limitation to statutes and the common law) and District policy.

The Board believes that engaging students, parents, families and the community in the education process is essential to improved academic success for students. The Board recognizes that a student's education is a responsibility shared by the District, students, parents, families and other members of the community during the entire time a student attends school. The Board believes that the District must create an environment that is conducive to learning and that strong, comprehensive stakeholder involvement is an important component.

Parent, Student, Community and School Engagement

The Helena Board of Trustees and employees believe that meaningful engagement of students, parents, families and the community in our schools contributes to the success of all students. The Helena Board of

Trustees and employees further believe that sustained engagement throughout all levels of school ensures a lasting and positive impact on lifelong student achievement and attitudes about learning.

The Helena School District commits to building partnerships by conducting outreach, supporting multi-directional communications, encouraging participation in each school's improvement planning process, and creating opportunities to volunteer and collaborate at all levels in support of student achievement. (See Volunteer Registration Form in the forms section at the end of this handbook).

[See: Board Policy: 4040 School, Student, Parent, Family and Community Engagement in Education](#)

Parking & Parking Lot Rules

Students wishing to park their vehicles on school property must obtain a Helena High School parking permit. Applications for parking permits are available after completing the online process. Pick up the permit at the main office. Permits are \$5.00. Permits are transferable only to the vehicles listed on the application form. Students must park properly in the parking lot to ensure the lot remains safe and the maximum numbers of spaces are available for vehicles. After a short grace period at the beginning of the year, students who park improperly will be subject to a ticket resulting in a \$10 fine. Students who continue to violate the parking policy will have a conference with their administrator and may face further penalties.

Students who fail to follow parking lot rules or fail to drive appropriately may lose the privilege of parking on school property.

Parking on District property is a privilege for all students. Students may not use, transport, carry, or possess alcohol, illegal drugs or any weapons in their vehicles on school property. While on school property, vehicles may be inspected at any time by staff, or by contractors employed by the District utilizing trained dogs, for the presence of alcohol, illegal drugs, drug paraphernalia, or weapons. In the event the school has reason to believe that alcohol, drugs, drug paraphernalia, or weapons are present, including by alert-trained dogs, the student's vehicle will be searched, and the student expressly consents to such a search by parking on District property. Notice provisions for students will be contained in the student handbook annually.

In addition, by exercising the privilege of parking in the school parking lots, the student acknowledges that the student does not have any expectation of privacy in the odors emanating from the student's vehicle which may alert a human or a canine to the presence of alcohol, illegal drugs, drug paraphernalia or weapons. By exercising the privilege of parking in the school parking lot, the student consents to having the vehicle searched if the school authorities have any other reasonable suspicion to believe that a violation of school rules or policy has occurred.

All vehicles must follow the requirements listed in the "Permit Purchase" section of the online parking permit system. Any vehicle parked in violation of these requirements will be ticketed. Excessive misconduct and violation of parking lot rules may result in the students not being able to park in the campus parking lots.

The requirements for parking in any student parking lot at school include: permit required, permit must be visible, and cars must be parked forward in the parking spot – no backing into a parking spot is allowed. Students are not to park in the faculty parking lot, the incorrect student parking lot, or the visitor parking

lot. Other violations which will result in a \$10 fine include but are not limited to; vehicle is not registered, vehicle is parked in a no parking zone or handicapped zone and blocking fire or emergency lanes.

Public Health Emergency

In the event of a declared public health emergency as determined by the Board of Trustees or a public health service the Board authorizes the Superintendent to take appropriate action to protect the health and safety of all students, staff, and visitors to include but not limited to closure of school buildings, implementation of infection control measures, and other appropriate safety actions.

The Superintendent will communicate with parents, citizens, and other stakeholders about the actions to be implemented per this policy.

[See: Board Policy: 7061 Public Health Emergency](#)

Recording Meetings – Not Allowed

For the security and integrity of our school community's communications, recording meetings with school staff is not permitted. This procedure has been implemented to ensure the accuracy and trustworthiness of the information exchanged during these discussions and meetings.

The ability to modify or manipulate recorded content raises concerns about the potential misrepresentation of conversations. By not allowing the recording of meetings, our goal is to maintain a transparent and reliable platform for communication among all participants.

The importance of clear and open communication between school staff and stakeholders is very important. If a participant has concerns about retaining accurate information from a meeting the individual is encouraged to take notes or request written summaries from the appropriate staff member.

Religious Practices

Each student has a right to individually, voluntarily, and silently pray or meditate in school in a manner that does not disrupt instructional or other activities of the school. Students may also pray in groups and discuss their religious views with other students as long as they are not disruptive or coercive. The school will not require, encourage, or coerce a student to engage in or to refrain from such prayer or meditation during any school activity. Student prayer, even if nonsectarian or non-proselytizing, will not be broadcast over the school public address system.

Students may study religions ancillary to the studies of human history and development and various national, cultural, and ethnic groups. This study will give neither preferential nor derogatory treatment to any religion or religious belief. The inclusion of religious music, symbols, art, or writings during instruction or in school programs or performances may occur where the religious content has a historical and/or independent educational purpose consistent with the approved curriculum. A student may read the Bible or

other religious material during free reading time or when self-selected and consistent with a classroom or course requirements.

A student will not be released from school at times other than at the end of the school day except with permission from the principal or designee and according to the building sign-out procedures. Students will be released, with a parental request in writing, for the purpose of receiving religious instruction. Unless the principal has granted approval because of extenuating circumstances, a student will not regularly be released before the end of the instructional day.

[See: Board Policy 2103 Recognition of Religious Beliefs and Customs](#)

Saturday School May Be Enacted Due to Emergencies

In emergencies, including during reasonable efforts of the trustees to make up aggregate hours of instruction lost during a declaration of emergency by the trustees under Section 20-9-806, MCA, pupil instruction may be conducted on a Saturday when it is approved by the trustees.

Pupil instruction may be held on a Saturday at the discretion of a school district for the purpose of providing additional pupil instruction beyond the minimum aggregate hours of instruction required in Section 20-1-301, MCA, provided student attendance is voluntary.

[See: Board Policy: 2005 School Year – Calendar- and- Day](#)

Signing of Passes for Students Late to Class

Passes are to be signed by a building administrator should a student be detained by another teacher. Students called into the guidance and counseling center will have their passes signed by a counselor or by an administrator. Students called to the office for attendance, phone calls, emergencies, etc., will have their passes signed by an office secretary or an administrator.

Students leaving the classroom for any reason must have a signed teacher pass. If a student is in the hall without a pass, s/he will be taken to the office, the issue will be discussed and determination will be made if an unexcused absence will be recorded, and the student will be taken back to the appropriate class. If a student is having a physical or emotional problem, which has resulted in missing a part of a class, s/he should report to the office, nurse or counselors, as soon as possible, to avoid an unexcused absence.

There will be no interruption of a class by a student unless written permission from an administrator is obtained.

Staff Phone Numbers and Email Addresses

Phone numbers and email addresses of all staff can be found on the District web site. The information for Helena High staff can be found at this web address: <http://hhs.helenaschools.org/contact/staff>.

Student Use of Buildings

Non-curriculum related secondary school student organizations may conduct meetings on school premises without intervention on the basis of the religious, political, philosophical, or other content of the meeting. If the meeting is student-initiated and not a part of a school sponsored activity, it must be conducted according to the following guidelines:

- The meeting is voluntary and student initiated;
- There is no sponsorship of the meeting by the school, the government, or its agents or employees;
- The meeting must occur during non-instructional time on regular school days;
- Employees or agents of the school or government are present only in a non-participatory capacity;
- The meeting does not materially and substantially interfere with the orderly conduct of educational activities within the school; and
- Non-school persons may not direct, conduct, control, or regularly attend activities.

Although the school assumes no sponsorship of these kinds of meetings, all meetings held on school premises must be scheduled and approved by the Principal.

[See: Board Policy 3105 – Student Use of Buildings – Equal Access.](#)

Vending Machines

Vending machines are available for student use before school and after school. At no time will teachers issue a pass to students for the purposes of leaving class and using these machines. Further, students are not to ask for a pass to leave class and access the machines or go to the machines during the school day. Failure to abide by these guidelines will result in these machines being turned off and/or removed.

A healthy foods vending machine is available for student use in the gym area and includes a variety of foods like salads and yogurt.

Videotaping of Students

The District has the right to use security and surveillance video cameras on District property to ensure the health, welfare, and safety of all staff, students, and visitors to District property, and to safeguard District facilities and equipment.

Video cameras may be used in locations as deemed appropriate by the Superintendent. Students in violation of Board policies, administrative regulations, building rules shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. Student violations of local, state, and/or federal law are referred to law enforcement.

Video recordings from security and surveillance cameras may become a part of a student's educational record. The District shall comply with all applicable state and federal laws related to record maintenance and retention. Signs will be posted at various locations to inform students, staff, and members of the public that video surveillance cameras are in use. The District will seek consent before recording students individually in the classroom.

Students may be videoed at events and practices open to the public, including but not limited to public performances, dress rehearsals, athletic practices open to the public and athletic competitions.

Visitors to the Schools

The District encourages visits to all District buildings by Board members, parents, citizens, and taxpayers at appropriate times within the discretion of building administration.

All visitors shall check-in at the school's main office for purposes of safety, security, and assistance. If a conference with a teacher is desired the District requests that an appointment be made in advance. Conferences with teachers need to be scheduled outside school hours or during the teacher's preparation period.

[See: Board Policy 4020 – Visitors to the School.](#)

Volunteer Information

Helena High School encourages parents to consider volunteering. If you are interested, please duplicate the **Volunteer Registration Form** and return it to the principal.

All volunteers who have unsupervised access to District students on District property or at a District sanctioned event will be required to submit to a comprehensive criminal background check, which will include a fingerprint-based background check. Volunteers will not be able to serve until the District has received and approved the results of the criminal background check.

See: Volunteer Registration Form on page 119.

ACADEMIC INFORMATION:

Acceptance of Transfer Credits

Helena Public Schools generally accept transfer credits from other accredited schools and institutions. Transfer credits from schools and institutions accredited by the Montana Office of Public Instruction, the Northwest Accrediting Association or similar US accrediting agency, Department of Defense Schools, or schools accredited by the appropriate State Department of Public Instruction of the respective state will be accepted. Correspondence and online credit will be accepted from schools and institutions accredited by the Northwest Association or similar accrediting agency.

Credits from non-accredited schools are subject to review and evaluation by the principal or principal's designee. Acceptance of transfer credits from non-accredited schools is not guaranteed. A placement assessment may be administered to students transferring from a non-accredited school to ensure enrollment in appropriate courses.

Alternative Assignments

Adopted curriculum is determined through a systematic process, which culminates with the approval by the Board of Trustees. The adoption of curricular materials that align with Montana State Standards and district curriculum is approved by the Superintendent.

The Board recognizes the right of an individual parent or guardian to request that his or her child not read or view specific curriculum materials.

The Board further recognizes that significant instructional preparation is necessary to align curricular activities and assignments with state and local standards and learner outcomes.

To ensure that all parents, guardians, and students are informed about course expectations classroom teachers are to develop a course syllabus that includes an overview of the course and an estimated timeline that identifies when course content will be covered during the semester. In addition to the use of the textbooks, the syllabus should include any supplemental materials to be used during the course. The course syllabus is to be distributed to students during the first week of the course and to new students as soon as they are enrolled in the course.

The following procedure for requesting an alternative assignment will govern when an individual parent or guardian requests that his or her child be excused from a curricular assignment. “Alternative Curricular Assignment Request” forms are available in the School Office and the School Library.

1. A parent or guardian with a concern about curricular materials should first discuss the matter with the classroom teacher with the objective of resolving the matter promptly and informally.
2. If after the informal meeting the parent or guardian wishes to initiate a formal written request for an alternative assignment, they must complete and submit the “Alternative Curricular Assignment Request Form” to the building principal. If a parent/guardian seeks an alternative assignment for a classroom novel, film, unit, etc., the request must be received as early as possible in the course and prior to the time when his or her student will begin reading the book. This advance notification will allow time for the teacher to identify a comparable assignment that meets the original learner outcomes if possible.
3. The building principal will review the request and will send a copy to the District Curriculum Administrator. The principal will schedule a meeting with the parent/guardian and the classroom teacher to discuss the request and determine if a resolution can be reached.
4. If parent/guardian or teacher is not satisfied, he or she may appeal the building principal’s decision to the District Curriculum Administrator.
5. The District Curriculum Administrator will review the request, and seek input from the teacher, the building principal, the parent/guardian, and the building or grade level department chairs and will render a decision.
6. If either parent/guardian or the teacher is not satisfied with the District Curriculum Administrator’s decision, the decision may be appealed to the Superintendent who shall consult with the parties involved.
7. The Superintendent will render a decision, which shall be final.

Book Challenge

The Board of Trustees, although it is ultimately responsible for all instructional and library material, recognizes the right of students to free access to many different types of books and resources. The Board also recognizes the right of teachers, librarians and administrators to select books and other materials in accordance with the adopted curriculum, current trends in education, and student and staff needs, and to make them available in schools and libraries.

Therefore, books and other resources will be chosen for value of interest and enlightenment of all students in the school community. A book or other resource will not be excluded because of the race, nationality, political, or religious values of the writer or of the material's style and language. Every effort will be made to provide materials that present all points of view concerning the international, national, and local problems and issues of our times. Books and other resources of sound factual authority will not be proscribed or removed from library shelves or classrooms because of partisan doctrinal approval or disapproval.

Censorship of books and other materials will be challenged in order to maintain the school's responsibility to provide information and enlightenment. Accordingly, the Board will deal with censorship of books or other materials as follows:

- The final decision on controversial materials rests with the Board after the established process for handling challenged materials has been exhausted/completed.
- The Board recognizes the right of an individual parent or guardian to request that his or her child not have to read a given book, or view a particular media work.
- Any parent or person of legal standing who wishes to request reconsideration of the use of any book or resource in the school must make such request in writing on forms provided through building principals or school librarians.

[Administrative Procedure for the enforcement of this policy) may be obtained in the Central Administration building, and each school office.]

[See: Board Policy 2067 – Handling Challenged or Questioned Material](#)

Curriculum: Use of Supplemental Resources

A supplemental resource is an instructional material used to support, enrich, or reinforce the district's core curriculum(s), state content standards, and learning objectives. These materials are not intended (and should not) replace the adopted programs. Rather, these materials and resources are selected to help address diverse student needs, extend learning, offer additional practice, support the core program with missing skill support or learning, and promote equitable access to high-quality instruction.

Supplemental resources may be used to:

- Provide additional practice or review of key concepts,
- Offer enrichment opportunities for students working beyond grade-level expectations,
- Support targeted intervention for students requiring remediation or Tier 2/3 supports,
- Differentiate instruction based on learning styles, readiness, or language proficiency,
- Extend engagement through varied instructional formats (e.g., apps, texts, manipulatives, primary

sources, etc.).

Examples may include leveled texts that a teacher wrote a Donor's Choose grant for, content-aligned digital platforms (e.g., Newsela, Prodigy, Kahoot), vocabulary tools or graphic organizers (e.g., Diffit), or videos supporting a specific lesson objective. All online subscriptions that interface with student information must comply with the Student Privacy Act (hyperlink policy).

When reviewing supplemental resources, educators are encouraged to use professional judgment and collaborate with colleagues or instructional coaches when choosing resources that meet the needs of their learners. Additionally, teachers must review the supplemental resource content in its entirety and consider the appropriateness of the resources and materials. Educators should ensure that supplemental resources:

- Align with the district's learning standards and curriculum goals,
- Support instructional equity by reflecting diverse perspectives, abilities, and cultural backgrounds,
- Are developmentally appropriate and accessible to all learners,
- Enhance, but do not replace, the core instructional materials,
- Promote student engagement, inquiry, and critical thinking.

To maintain alignment and consistency across classrooms and schools, the following approval process should be followed for supplemental resources not already reviewed or listed by the district:

- **Informal Use:** Teachers may use common, low-risk resources (e.g., articles, videos, practice tools) as long as they align with curriculum goals and are age-appropriate. These tools must be communicated in weekly agenda and course syllabi.
- **Site-Based Review:** For more substantial or ongoing resources (e.g., entire platforms, printed programs), educators should consult with building administrators. Supplemental resources are funded by the building or department, and must be approved by the building principal and Curriculum Director.
- **District Review:** Any resource that will be used across multiple classrooms or grade levels—or represents a significant instructional shift—should be submitted for review to principal. The principal will then set up a meeting with the Curriculum Director and include a representative team to discuss.

If in doubt, staff should seek guidance from building leadership or the Curriculum Director to ensure materials meet district expectations and support a coherent instructional program.

Curriculum: Withdrawal from Human Sexuality Instruction or Identity Instruction

A parent, guardian, or other person who is responsible for the care of a student may refuse to allow the student to attend or may withdraw the students from human sexuality instruction. The withdrawal or refusal to attend is an excused absence. Human sexuality instruction is instruction that has the goal or purpose of studying, exploring, or informing students about intimate relationships, sexual anatomy, sexual reproduction, sexually transmitted infections, sexual acts, abstinence, contraception, or reproductive rights and responsibilities. These absences do not count toward the student's discretionary 10-day total.

Written consent from the parent or legal guardian is required prior to any student attending identity instruction. Identity instruction is instruction that has the goal or purpose of studying, exploring, or informing students about gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation. A student is excused from not attending identity instruction unless the student's parent/guardian provided written consent for the student to be in attendance prior to the instruction.

The District will provide parents/guardians with at least five (5) school days' notice (but not more than 14 school days notice) before human sexuality or identity instruction is scheduled to occur.

[See: Board Policy 2016 Human Sexuality Instruction](#)

Change of Academic Schedule

Daily Schedule Change

Changes shall be made through individual counselors. Class schedules must be continued while and until the change has been finalized.

Withdrawal from Class

A student who is withdrawn or dropped from a subject two weeks or more after the beginning of a semester will have a WF recorded on the student's permanent record unless under exceptional medical circumstances a WM is necessary. Exceptional circumstances must be demonstrated before any student will be withdrawn or dropped from any class.

No provision of this policy shall limit procedural due process available to any student or a student's parent, legal guardian, or person with parental authority.

Withdrawal from School

A student withdrawing from school must:

1. Have parent/guardian approval to their Administrator/ or the Registrar.
2. Must obtain a withdrawal form from the Registrar in the main office.
3. Must have all his/her teachers sign the form, including Counselor, Librarian, Bookkeeper, Administrator, and Case Manager (if student has one).
4. Must pay all fines & fees.
5. Must return all school property (e.g. textbooks, library books, Chromebooks, etc.)

Once the withdraw form is completed and turned into the Registrar, the student will be given a copy of the withdrawal/transfer form, their transcript, Immunizations and a school profile to take to their new school.

Class Interruptions

There will be no interruption of a class by a student unless written permission from an administrator is obtained.

Course Fees

A student may be charged a fee for consumable supplies or maintenance and repair of equipment that is used in classes and/or courses offered for graduation credit including but not limited to career and technical education and fine arts classes. Students may also be charged a fee for field trips or facility rentals associated with classroom or school activities either within or out of the district boundaries.

If a student is to be charged a fee, both the student and parent shall be notified regarding the amount of the fee or charge.

A student may be charged reasonable tuition for activities not offered for graduation credit or for repeat courses offered for credit. These include adult education courses, drivers' education, athletics, intramural sports, extracurricular activities, and under three-mile transportation charges.

District students who apply and are approved for either free or reduced lunches may request a waiver of applicable tuition/fees. A current school lunch application must be on file with the appropriate school in order for this waiver to be granted. Absent extenuating circumstances, only one waiver will be granted per student for drivers' education.

[See: Board Policy 3075 – Student Charges, Fines and Fees](#)

Education and Vocational Planning

College Entrance Exams

Students planning on attending a post-secondary institution will need to take the College Boards (SAT) and/or American College Test (ACT) for college entrance. Students are encouraged to see the counselors early to determine anticipated test dates and application information. Post-secondary institutions list the required or preferred test requirement in the "Admission Requirements" section of their catalogue. Students planning to attend a military academy or ROTC programs should take the ACT or SAT in the spring or summer of their junior year.

Federal Financial Aid

Federal financial aid provides students with financial assistance based on need as established under federal, state and institutional guidelines. Total resources including student earnings and/or savings, parental contributions, social security benefits, veterans' benefits, vocational rehabilitation, scholarships, grants, and student employment from outside sources are taken into consideration. Financial aid forms are available in December in the Guidance and Counseling Center or from the post-secondary institution you are planning on attending. Most post-secondary institutions require that forms be completed and post-marked by midnight December 1st to compete for available financial aid funds. At most schools, forms completed after December 1st will be considered only if funds are available. Information for federal financial aid forms is taken directly from parent's income tax forms. A change going forward from the 2017-2018 school year is colleges and FAFSA are now using prior year tax information to fill out the FAFSA forms. Financial aid forms are completed each year a student attends school and wants to be considered for financial aid. Questions should be directed to the selected institution's financial aid office or to your high school counselor.

The online application for FAFSA (federal student aid) can be found at this web site: <https://fafsa.ed.gov/>

Guidance / Counseling / Career Center Services

An organized program of guidance and counseling is provided for the benefit of each student. Students are assigned to a counselor upon entering Helena High and whenever possible stay with the same counselor until graduation. Students, teachers, counselors and/or parents initiate interviews and conferences each year to assist students in making educational and vocational/career plans and to help in any other area of personal concern.

School counselors fully respect the right to privacy of those with whom they enter counseling relationships. This is a professional responsibility. A counseling relationship requires an atmosphere of trust and confidence between the student / client and the counselor. A student / client has the right to privacy and to expect confidentiality. This confidentiality must not be abridged except where there is a perceived clear and present danger to the client and/or to other persons.

The school will not conduct a psychological examination, test or treatment without first obtaining the parent's written consent, unless required by state or federal law. The school will notify the parent or guardian of the right to opt a student out of a mental health screening and will be notified of any issues or concerns resulting from a mental health screening.

Montana Law mandates school district personnel to report suspected cases of abuse or neglect. In addition, Counselors are required to follow the Title 42 Confidential Federal Regulations requirement with regards to Alcohol and Drug Abuse. These can be viewed at:

http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx_02/42cfr2_02.html

Copies are also available for viewing at the school library.

Scholarships and Awards

Scholarships are awarded by community and service organizations, public or private colleges, universities, vocational-technical centers, businesses, and individuals.

Scholarship selection may be based upon one or more of the following criteria: financial need, extra-curricular activities, school and/or community honors and recognition, academic records, community activities and organizations, church activities and future goals or plans.

Scholarships are advertised through special bulletins that are posted in American Studies 2, Senior English, Grade Level Team Chats and various other classrooms and sites throughout the building. Applications are available in the Student Services Center Scholarship file.

Students who want information about scholarships should read college catalogues, contact post-secondary financial aid offices, college department advisors or deans, and high school counselors. Students may pick up current scholarship information in the Student Services Centers at each high school.

Students who are interested in scholarships are recommended to take the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) during their junior year.

PEAK Gifted and Talented Program

The Helena Public Schools PEAK Program provides a continuum of comprehensive services for identified gifted and talented (GT) students in grades PreK–12. Rooted in research-based practices, the program is designed to meet the unique academic and social-emotional needs of high-ability learners through enrichment, acceleration, and specialized instruction.

Gifted learners are identified through a multi-faceted assessment process that considers quantitative and qualitative data and reviews a body of evidence to fully understand each individual learner. Starting in second grade, students are given an aptitude test (CogAT) to get a comprehensive measure. This is considered in addition to behavioral and creativity markers, and teacher and parent input through a referral process in some instances. The identification model aligns with state and national guidelines to ensure equitable opportunities for all student populations.

PEAK services include a combination of models. In all settings, students and caregivers can explore options for academic acceleration, which is available through a structured referral team process. These models incorporate the voice and choice of students and their caregivers.

- Elementary PEAK programming (grades 3-5) serves students from multiple schools, at one elementary site different days of the week. Learning includes thematic and interdisciplinary units with a focus on inquiry, advanced content, creative thinking, speaking and listening skill development, and opportunities to collaborate with professionals and peers across the district.
- Middle school PEAK programming (grades 6-8) serves students in their home school. Students are challenged to investigate, problem-solve, collaborate, and engage in self-directing learning paired with a monthly, apprentice-style learning seminar.
- High school PEAK programming (grades 9-12) serves students in their home schools. Some models of learning include student-led meetings for goal setting and mentorship, multi-day symposiums to explore advanced topics and career pathways, community involvement activities, dual enrollment and college credit options.
- Across all levels, the services work to challenge students as individuals among intellectual peers and to take these skills and apply them across all learning environments. Recognizing the essential role families play in the development of gifted learners, PEAK engages parents in ways to learn about giftedness and best support their gifted learning, PEAK parent group support, and through collaboration with school teams to support students' academic, behavioral, and emotional needs.

Grades

Grading System

Educators and parents alike recognize that student performance should be evaluated regularly so that appropriate steps may be taken to maintain, remedy, enrich or strengthen the student's performance. Both the person reporting the grade and the person receiving the grade should be able to easily interpret the grade. The high schools use a grading system composed of the following grades.

For computing grade point averages the following numerical values are assigned to the letter grade:

A+, A, A-	=	4 points
B+, B, B-	=	3 points
C+, C, C-	=	2 points
D+, D, D-	=	1 point
F	=	0 points

Below is a District wide grading scale used by all teachers to calculate grades for grade reporting, including course history.

Grade ^	Description	Counts in GPA	Grade Points (GPA)	Cutoff % ^
A+	Superior, exceptional achievemer	☒	4	97
A	Superior, exceptional achievemer	☒	4	92
A-	Superior, exceptional achievemer	☒	4	90
B+	Above average work	☒	3	88
B	Above average work	☒	3	82
B-	Above average work	☒	3	80
C+	Average	☒	2	78
C	Average	☒	2	72
C-	Average	☒	2	70
D+	Below average, barely meeting th	☒	1	68
D	Below average, barely meeting th	☒	1	62
D-	Below average, barely meeting th	☒	1	60
F	Failure, no credit	☒	0	0
CR	Credit	☐	0	0
I	Incomplete, no credit earned	☐	0	0
NC	No grade, no credit earned	☒	0	0
P	Satisfactory completion of course	☐	0	0
W	Withdrawal, no credit earned	☐	0	0
WF	Withdrawal, failing, no credit earn	☒	0	0

Semester Grades

Semester grades are used to calculate valedictorian, salutatorian and honors status for graduation. Semester grades are also used to calculate scholar status for the Helena Education Foundation's "Celebration of Excellence".

Transcripts – Official PARCHMENT

A student's transcript is an official record which records the courses taken by a student from ninth through twelfth grade. In addition to final grades the transcript also documents a student's immunization record.

As a Helena High School student you can request a transcript be sent to colleges/universities. Transcripts are sent electronically through a service called **Parchment**. Each senior has been given a unique registration code. (Although it is possible to set-up an account without one.) This is a service provided free of charge as long as you are a Helena High School student. Seniors have until August 1 of their graduating year to order without a fee. [Click this link to register with Parchment.](#)

Students may request official transcripts at the front office to be sent within two working days of the request. Students will be given the first five transcripts free of charge. Every transcript thereafter will require payment of \$1.00.

Student Name Sample, Sally		
Student ID 114353	Grade 12	
Birth Place Nowhere, NE	Date of Birth 01/08/2003	Gender F
Parents/Guardians Sample, Susan / Sample, John		
Mailing Address 12 Buckle My Shoe Helena, MT 59602		

Helena High School
Transcript

Enter Date:

Leave Date **currently enrolled**

Class of: **0**

MT State ID:

School Name/Address
**Helena High School
1300 Billings Ave
Helena, MT 59601
Tel: 406-324-2200, Fax: 406-324-2201**

Subj	Course Title	Mark:	S1 Cr	Mark:	S2 Cr	Subj	Course Title	Mark:	S1 Cr	Mark:	S2 Cr	Academic Summary	
16-17 Helena High School												Total GPA: 3.392	Class rank is Not Ranked
ENG	English 1	B+	0.50	B-	0.50							Earned Credit Hours: 25.50	Req. For Graduation: 23.00
MTH	Algebra I	B	0.50	A-	0.50							Test Scores	
SCI	Earth Science Hon	A	0.50	A	0.50							ACT	ACT
ELE	Physical Sci	C-	0.50	B+	0.50							Date: 00/00/0000	Date: 00/00/0000
ELE	Spanish 1	B	0.50	A-	0.50							Composite:	Composite: 00
FA	Capital Chorale	A	0.50	A	0.50							English:	English:
17-18 Helena High School												Math:	Math:
HP	Frosh HP PE	B+	0.50	B-	0.50							Reading:	Reading:
ENG	English 2	C	0.50	B	0.50							Writing Sub:	Writing Sub:
SST	World Cultures	B-	0.50	B	0.50							Writing Combined:	Writing Combined:
SST	World Culture Hon	B-	0.50	B	0.50							Science:	Science:
MTH	Geometry	B	0.50	A	0.50							ELA:	ELA:
SCI	Science Transfer	B	0.50	A	0.50							STEM:	STEM:
												SAT	SAT
SCI	Biology 1	C+	0.50	B-	0.50							Date: 00/00/0000	Date: 00/00/0000
FA	Capital Chorale	A	0.50	A	0.50							Total:	Total:
HP	Soph HP PE	B+	0.50									Critical Reading:	Critical Reading:
HE	Health Enhancmt			C	0.50							Math:	Math:
ENG	English 3	A	0.50									Writing:	Writing:
18-19 Helena High School												Montana University System Writing Assessment	
ENG	English 3			B	0.50							Date: 00/00/0000	
USH	American History	A-	0.50	A	0.50							Writing: 0.0	
MTH	Algebra II	C	0.50	B-	0.50							Work In Progress	
SCI	Biology AP	B+	0.50	A	0.50							Subj	Course Title
SCI	AP Environmental Science	B	0.50	A	0.50							Credits	
ELE	Spanish 2	A-	0.50	B+	0.50								
VOC	Money Management	A	0.50	A	0.50								
19-20 Helena High School													
ENG	English 4 C	A	0.50										
AMG	American Govt	A	0.50										
Mth	AP Calculus AB	A-	0.50										
ELE	Physics	A	0.50										
FA	Ceramics 1	A	0.50										
VOC	Carpentry 1	A-	0.50										
		A-	0.50										

AP=Adv Placement WF=Withdraw Fail WM=Withdraw Medical **=Mod Grade

Comments:

DTP
DTTD
HIB
HPA
HPB
HPV
IPV
MCV
MENB
MMP
MMR
MSL
PCV
ROT
RUB
TDP
VAR

Transcript is official if signed by school and imprinted with seal.
School

Official's Signature _____ Date: 8/13/19

Withholding of Grades, Transcripts, Diplomas

Montana law (M.C.A. 20-5-201) allows a school district to withhold the grades, diploma, or transcripts of a pupil who is responsible for the cost of school materials or the loss or damage of school property until the pupil or the pupil's parent or guardian satisfies the obligation.

If a student transfers to another school district in the state the receiving district will be notified of any financial obligation of the pupil and will be requested to withhold the pupil's grades, diploma or transcripts until the obligation to the sending district is satisfied. Parents may challenge the underlying financial obligation using the District's Uniform Complaint Procedure.

Graduation Information & Requirements

Twenty-three (23) academic credits are required by the Helena Public Schools.

½ Year

Health

1 ½ Years

P.E.

1 Year

American Studies 1

American Studies 2

Social Studies

Fine Arts

Career/Technical Education
(CTE)

2 Years

Science

3 Years

Mathematics

4 Years

English

Elective Credits

7

Note: Financial Literacy and Economics are embedded in American Studies 1 and 2.

Junior, senior or foreign exchange transfer students may directly petition the Superintendent to waive Helena School District No. 1 course requirements which exceed the minimum state requirements for graduation, as outlined in Rule 10.55.905 of the Montana School Accreditation Standards.

All other students must petition the Board of Trustees to waive Helena School District No. 1 specific course requirements or total credit requirements which exceed the minimum state requirements for graduation.

The Board of Trustees or Superintendent may grant waivers based on individual student needs, hardships, aspirations, and performance levels.

Educational Disruption

If a student who has experienced an educational disruption meets the minimum high school credit requirement for graduation as established by administrative rules of the Board of Public Education but will not meet a higher credit requirement established by Board of Trustees, the District shall award the student a diploma.

The District may distinguish the diploma in a reasonable manner from standard diplomas issued under this policy. For the purposes of this policy, "educational disruption" means a disruption experienced during grades nine through twelve caused by homelessness, involvement in the child welfare system or juvenile justice system, a medical or mental health crisis, or another event considered a qualifying educational disruption by the District.

[See: Board Policy 2085 Graduation Requirements](#)

Commencement

All seniors may begin plans for participation in commencement exercises if, at the beginning of the second semester senior year, they are within 5.5 credits of being able to graduate. Formal commencement exercises are conducted annually at the end of the regular school year. The ceremony is a dignified formal occasion held to honor the graduates.

Should the goals of meeting all graduation requirements not be achieved during the second semester, the student may participate in commencement exercises but would not receive a diploma until all requirements have been met. A student may not receive this consideration for the following reasons: lack of effort, attendance, or because of unacceptable behavior.

- All students are expected to follow HHS behavior standards.
- Wear appropriate clothing under your academic gown (e.g. dresses, slacks, shoes)

The Helena Public Schools will permit students to honor their American Indian heritage through the display of culturally significant tribal regalia at commencement ceremonies.

Prohibited items that may not be worn or incorporated into the graduation ceremony include but are not limited to; items that promote drug use, weapon use, threats of violence, sexual harassment, bullying or other intimidation, or violates a district policy, state or federal law.

The school administration will review student presentations and specific content and will advise participants about appropriate language for the audience and occasion.

[See: Board Policy 2333 Participation in Commencement Exercises](#)

Commencement Practice

Commencement practice will be conducted with all seniors participating in the graduation ceremony. It is mandatory that students attend the entire practice. Failure to do so may result in removal of the student from the official graduation ceremony. Exceptions must be approved prior to commencement practice by the principal or the principal designee. Exceptions include family emergencies and illness. Students should plan to adjust their schedules to accommodate commencement practice. Work schedules are not considered as an exception. Exceptions to this requirement may be granted by the Principal for extenuating or exceptional circumstances.

Early Graduation Requirements

Students may graduate from Helena High School with less than four (4) years of high school attendance under the following circumstances: Completion of all required course work as detailed Helena School District No. 1 [Policy 2085 ~ "Graduation Requirements"](#). A total of 23 credits in all required subjects will be required beginning with the Class of 2020.

Once approved for early graduation, students will maintain their cohort status for purpose of state testing requirements and reporting (mainly allowing for the taking of the ACT and reporting of this state mandated test) and are eligible for all accolades that are associated with the graduating class and will become a member of the official Grade Point Average and class rank list.

1. Early graduation must be approved by the Superintendent and must be requested by August of the year prior to the junior year.
2. A formal written request must be presented to the Principal. The request must include rationale demonstrating that it is in the best interest of the student to complete graduation requirements early and to receive a diploma. The request should be made no later than the first semester of the junior year and must be signed by both the student and his/her parent, for graduation after the seventh (7th) semester.
3. The counseling office will make a thorough review of the student's credits and a conference with the student and his/her parent(s) or legal guardian(s) regarding the reasons for the request.
4. After review by the high school administration the request will be submitted to the Superintendent who will permit or deny.

Grade Point Average (GPA) and Class Rank List

The official Grade Point Average (GPA) and class rank list for graduating students will be calculated twelve school days into second semester. Students must be currently enrolled full-time at Helena High School and have completed seven semesters of high school to be eligible for the official GPA list and class rank list (exceptions to the 7 semesters include those approved for early graduation, their GPA and class rank will be calculated using the last completed semester (5th in most cases).

Six Credit-Bearing Courses Requirement

Students in grades 9-12 must be enrolled in a minimum of six credit bearing classes unless the principal or principal's designee has granted an exception or a student is attending under the Part-time attendance guidelines.

Students wishing to appeal this requirement must schedule a meeting with the building Principal or Principal designee. Students must present their request in writing and provide supporting documentation where appropriate. Students who choose to end their day early must leave campus or congregate in approved areas.

Exceptions to the six-credit requirement may include but are not limited to following:

1. Family Needs (e.g. financial)
2. Educational – requires documentation
 - Enrolled in post-secondary program (e.g. Carroll College or HCT)
 - Enrolled in post-secondary online or dual credit program
3. IEP and 504 Educational Plans
4. Extraordinary Opportunity – requires written plan
 - Academic Internship
 - Senior Project
 - Job Shadow
 - Independent Study / Other

Summer and Make-Up School Guidelines

Make-up school is intended for seniors that fail first semester of English IV and Government. Students must have been in attendance for a minimum of 70 days per semester or receive an exemption based on extraordinary circumstances to qualify for summer and/or make-up school.

Summer school is available to all students who have failed a semester core class required for graduation. Students are not eligible for summer school if they have missed more than 20 hours of class instruction, or if they have withdrawn from class, or receive an exemption based on extraordinary circumstances by the Principal or their designee. **Each summer school class is equivalent to a half (.50) credit.**

Graduation Requirements for Youth who Experience a Disruption in Education

If an enrolled high school student who has experienced an educational disruption meets the minimum high school credit requirements established by the State Board of Public Education but will not meet the higher credit requirement established by the Helena Board of Trustees the trustees shall award the student a diploma which may be different than other diplomas issued by the trustees.

Multi Linguistic Learners

Helena Public Schools is federally required to support students who are English Learners by providing language instruction services. The District ensures parents have opportunities to meet with school staff, stay involved in their child's education, and support their child's English language development. Whenever possible, information is shared in a language and format families can understand.

As part of the registration process, all families complete a Home Language Survey to help identify students who may qualify for English language development services. If a language other than English is indicated, the District administers the WIDA Screener to determine the student's English proficiency level within 30 days of enrollment. Based on the results, students who qualify for services are identified as English Learners (ELs). Parents are notified of these results. This notification will include the reasons for identification, the child's English proficiency level and how it was determined, the instructional methods used in the program, how the program will support language development and academic success, and the expected timeline for reaching English proficiency.

All identified EL students participate annually in the ACCESS for ELLs assessment to monitor progress in listening, speaking, reading, and writing in English. Parents are notified of results as soon as they become available.

Parents seeking more information about the District's identification of and programs for students with limited English proficiency should contact the Kaitlyn Hess (khess1@helenaschools.org).

Parent and Student Portals / Automated System Notifications Opt Out

Parents and students can access student grades, assignments and attendance information at any time through the online PowerSchool portals. A username, password and directions will be provided to parents with students enrolled in grades 4-12. Parents should not share their password with their

student. Students will receive their own username and password. If you wish to opt out of system notifications please complete the “Automated System Notification Opt Out” form.

See: Automated Systems Notification Opt Out form on page 122 .

Part-time Attendance

Students in grades 9-12 residing within the Helena School District and currently fulfilling their primary education requirement outside the Helena schools (through home school and/or private school education) are eligible to enroll and participate in classes on a part-time basis. Part-time students must declare part-time status upon registering and must enroll in a minimum of two classes. Part-time students must enroll in year-long courses prior to the opening of school and semester courses at least one week prior to the start of the semester.

Special needs students residing within the district who are attending private or home schools will be accepted in accordance with state and federal statutes and regulations.

This policy does not restrict or limit the ability of a nonpublic or home school student from participating in extracurricular activities if eligible pursuant to Montana law. The District will also admit a student on a part-time basis as provided in an IEP or Section 504 plan and in accordance with state and federal statutes and regulations.

[See Board Policy: 3155 Part-Time Attendance](#)

Personalized Learning Opportunities

The District seeks to create personalized learning opportunities permitted by Montana law, including but not limited to work-based learning, proficiency-based learning, offsite instruction, and transformational learning, to fulfill the people’s goal of developing the full educational potential of each person.

[See Board Policy: 2423 Personalized Learning](#)

Post-Secondary and Online Learning Opportunities

College & University Course Guidelines

Helena Public Schools offers juniors and seniors the opportunity to undertake additional academic challenges and participate in courses not offered at the high school level. The counselors’ and Principal’s approval must be secured before a student may submit an application to a college or university participating in this program. Students who want their work to count toward their high school GPA calculation must have pre-approval from an administrator. The program is monitored by the Guidance and Counseling Center.

Dual Credit

Dual credit allows high schools students to simultaneously earn credit toward both a high school diploma and college coursework that can lead to a post-secondary degree or certificate, or toward transfer to another college. The primary purpose of offering dual credit courses is to deliver high quality, introductory, college level courses to high-performing high school students. The Helena Public

Schools have dual credit partnerships with a number of Montana colleges and universities. Students interested in dual credit opportunities must meet with their building administration to determine available options.

Students should be aware of Montana High School Association on-campus attendance eligibility requirements for activity participation.

One-Two-Free – Montana University System

The Montana University System utilizes the “One-Two-Free” program which enables students to enroll in their first two courses, up to six credits, at **NO COST**. After a student has maximized the two courses (six credits) then students follow the dual enrollment formula and can enroll in college courses at a reduced rate (50% of the current resident tuition).

Online Courses Board Policy

The Helena Public Schools Board of Trustees recognizes and values quality instruction provided to students on campus by Montana licensed educators. Helena Public Schools campus based education, serves as the primary and preferred source of instruction for most Helena students.

The Board further recognizes that for some students online learning is an appropriate supplemental or alternative means to provide quality educational services.

[See Board Policy: 2135 – K-12 Online Learning Policy](#)

Montana Digital Academy

Freshmen, Sophomore and Junior students enrolled at Helena High School may also enroll in the Montana Digital Academy (MTDA) for one credit (year-long course) per year. Seniors enrolled at Helena High School may enroll in the Montana Digital Academy for up to two credits (two year- long courses) during their Senior year.

A maximum of 2.5 Montana Digital Academy credits may be applied to the Helena School District graduation requirement of 23 credits. Credits earned beyond the 2.5 allowed will be included on the student transcript as additional elective credit. Students wishing to appeal this requirement must schedule a meeting with the building principal or principal designee. Students must present their case in writing and provide rationale for their request.

Students interested in enrolling in the Montana Digital Academy must complete the MTDA enrollment form and return it to their school counselor or administrator. During the summer students can complete the form and schedule an appointment with an administrator by calling 324-2500.

Helena High School students, who receive a withdrawal/failure (WF) or a failure from a traditional high school course, must wait until the following semester to enroll in a MTDA course.

There will be no fees for online courses during the 2025-2026 school year.

For more information go to: <http://www.montanadigitalacademy.org> or contact your school counselor or administrator.

Carroll College – Advanced College Experience (ACE) Program

The [Advanced College Experience \(ACE\)](#) program is an opportunity for highly motivated high school students to engage in Carroll courses. Each student may enroll in up to 2 100-level courses (no more than 8 credits) or applicable 200-level courses with available seats after current student registration. Students will be responsible for a \$50 per credit ACE tuition charge, plus a \$60 semester fee to cover technology and parking, plus any course fees. The typical student enrolling in one 3-credit course would pay \$210-\$240, or in one 4-credit course with lab would pay \$260-\$320 depending on course/lab fees.

The course schedule can be found online.

Open to all local area high school students who meet the qualifications:

- Junior or senior level in high school
- minimum 3.25 high school cumulative GPA
- approval of parent and high school counselor

Students will be responsible for a \$50 per credit ACE tuition charge, plus a \$60 semester fee to cover technology and parking, plus any course fees. The typical student enrolling in one 3-credit course would pay \$210-\$240, or in one 4-credit course with lab would pay \$260-\$320 depending on course/lab fees.

Students enrolled in the program will be issued a Carroll ID that will provide access to Carroll's Corette Library as well as Carroll home athletic and performing arts events. Students will be invited to attend lectures and other academic events available to all Carroll students. A parking pass will also be provided for students to park in specified areas on campus.

[For more information: Carroll College Advanced College Experience \(ACE\)](#)

Student Recognition/Awards

Honor Roll

An academic grade point average of 3.25 for a quarter places a student on the HHS Honor Roll. The Honor Roll will be announced every nine-week period. Quarter grades are used to determine honor roll status.

National Honor Society

The National Honor Society is a service organization established to recognize students who reflect high academic accomplishments and exemplary character, leadership and service qualities.

National Honor Society Selection Criteria

Membership in the Helena High School Chapter of the National Honor Society is an honor bestowed upon students during their junior year. Selection for membership is by faculty council and is based on outstanding scholarship, character, leadership and service. Once selected, members have the responsibility to continue to demonstrate these qualities. The criteria for selection are outlined below.

- Scholarship: cumulative grade point average of 3.5 or higher
- Character: Integrity: no recorded incidents of cheating or intentional dishonesty including plagiarism

- Behavior: no record of knowingly violating school regulations; no record of civil offense within the community
- Cooperation: willing to assist classmates and school staff
- Ethics: maintains high personal standards of honesty and ethical behavior
- Leadership: demonstrates initiative and a wholesome influence within the class, school
- Community or work environment
- Service: Volunteers time for the benefit of the school and/or community

Note: Any potentially disqualifying event documented with building administration and recorded in the student record may be cause for disqualifying a student from consideration for National Honor Society membership.

National Honor Society Selection Procedure

The National Honor Society chapter of Helena High School is a duly chartered and affiliated chapter of the National Honor Society.

Membership is open to those students who meet the required standards in four areas of evaluation: scholarship, leadership, service, and character. Students are selected for membership by majority vote of a 5-member Faculty Council, appointed annually by the principal, which bestows this honor upon qualified students on behalf of the faculty of our school each. The chapter adviser(s) is(are) also appointed by the principal and facilitates all selection procedures and chapter activities during the year.

Students in their 2nd semester of junior year are eligible for membership. For the scholarship criterion, a student must have a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or better on a 4.0 scale. Those students who meet this criterion are invited to complete a Student Application Form that provides the Faculty Council with information regarding the candidate's leadership and service. A history of leadership experiences and participation in school or community service is also required.

To evaluate a candidate's character, the Faculty Council obtains additional professional input: official school disciplinary records are reviewed. These documents and the Student Application Forms are carefully reviewed by the Faculty Council to determine whether each candidate meets the criteria for membership. A majority vote of the Council is necessary for selection. Following a review of the results of the Faculty Council voting by the principal, candidates are notified regarding selection or non-selection according to a predetermined schedule.

Once the notification process is completed, a formal induction ceremony is held at the school to recognize all the newly selected members. Once inducted, new members are required to maintain the same level of performance (or better) in all criteria that led to their selection. This obligation includes regular attendance at chapter meetings held monthly during the school year, and participation in the chapter service projects(s). A full list of member obligations is provided to all candidates and is available from the chapter adviser upon request. Students or parents who have questions regarding the selection process or membership obligations can contact the chapter adviser(s) by contacting the main office of HHS.

NHS Graduation Recognition

Members who have remained in good standing, completed their service requirement, and maintained equal to or greater than the 3.5 cumulative GPA requirement on the official GPA and class rank list

may wear the blue and gold National Honor Society tassel at the graduation ceremony. The tassel is awarded to seniors at the Spring National Honor Society induction ceremony.

Valedictorian and Salutatorian Awards

Valedictorian and Salutatorian awards are determined from the official Grade Point Average and class rank list for graduating students, following the completion of the 7th semester (or similar semester if graduating early) of their high school career. The Valedictorian award is awarded to students that have earned a 4.0 G.P.A on the official Grade Point Average and class rank list. The Salutatorian award is awarded to students that have earned all A letter grades and one B letter grade on the official Grade Point Average and class rank list. Semester grades are used for these calculations.

Helena Education Foundation Distinguished Scholar Awards

The Helena Education Foundation annually recognizes graduating seniors who reflect high academic achievement.

Beginning with the **Class of 2024** students must meet or exceed the following qualifications by the end of the seventh semester, or subsequent semester if graduating early, to become a “Distinguished Scholar”.

- Minimum 3.75 GPA;
- Minimum 12 credit hours of honors, AP, accelerated, or college level classes according to a list agreed upon by schools by the end of the 7th semester;
- Minimum 24 total credit hours by the end of the 7th semester;
- Enrolled and physically present in the Helena Public Schools his or her senior year, unless already graduated and
- Minimum two extra-curricular activities (those not required by a class or for which a grade is given).



**HELENA
EDUCATION
FOUNDATION**

EXTRA AND CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES INFORMATION

Activity Ticket

An activity ticket admits students to all Helena High regularly scheduled athletic events and to all drama and musical events. The price of each ticket is \$30.00. It is to be used only by the student whose name appears on it. Activity tickets lost or stolen may be replaced at a cost of \$5.00.

All single ticket prices and activity ticket prices for the school year are listed below: All Athletic Events

Adult	\$6.00
Student	\$4.00
Grade K-12 Activity Ticket	\$30.00
Individual Adult Season Sports Passes	\$60.00

Academic Eligibility for Activities MHSA

The Board of Trustees recognizes the value and contributions of high school activities. The Trustees further recognize that academic growth is the primary mission of the school program.

Helena's high schools are members of the governing body of the Montana High School Association. To be eligible to participate in an Association Contest, a student shall meet all of the following criteria:

- be regularly enrolled in twenty hours per week at the school where the student participates.
- be in regular attendance.
- have received a passing grade and received credit in at least twenty periods of prepared class work or its equivalent in the **last previous semester**, at the school where the student participates.

All students who transfer from another accredited high school will have their initial eligibility determined by current Montana High School Association policy.

Credits earned during summer school DO NOT count toward eligibility.

School officials will work with coaches and advisors to implement procedures that encourage academic success for all students.

Extracurricular Activity Participation by Non-Public or Home School Students

Students who are not enrolled in a Helena Public School may participate in extracurricular activities offered by the Helena School District where the student resides as long as he/she meet certain requirements.

- Meet the same standards for participation as those required of full-time public school students.
- Comply with the same rules of any interscholastic organization governing the extracurricular activity.
- Maintain the same academic eligibility as required for participation in the extracurricular activity as a public-school student.
- Submit proof of academic eligibility. Proof of academic eligibility must be:
 - In writing;
 - Completed by the appropriate individual, either;
 - The non-public school's head administrator, or
 - The home-school educator providing student instruction.
 - With a certification or declaration that the information is true and correct.
 - The school principal must verify the eligibility requirements have been satisfied for a student participating in a home school for extracurricular activities requiring academic eligibility to participate.

- The verification cannot include any form of student assessment.
- The school district may determine the best methods of verification based on the information presented. These may include:
 - Review of recent schoolwork or tests completed.
 - Documentation from the program the child is using for home school.
 - Other information as is reasonably required to verify academic eligibility.
 - Have a resident address that lies within the Helena School District attendance Boundaries.
 - Enroll in the high school or middle school as an “Activities Only Student”

A student or their parent/guardian should direct all questions about this process to the Helena Public Schools Activity Director or the Building Principal for whom they wish to compete.

Pursuant to MCA 20-5-112, students in home or nonpublic schools may not be denied the ability to participate in extracurricular activities solely based on their enrollment in the students’ resident district. Home and nonpublic school students may ONLY participate in their resident district, and there is no ability for a home or nonpublic school student to “transfer” to another district for purposes of participation in extracurricular activities.

Home or nonpublic school students who reside in a school district with more than one high school can participate in extracurricular activities at any high school in their district if approved by the school district. Districts that enforce attendance area restrictions may enforce those restrictions with home and nonpublic school students. Once a student participates in any extracurricular activity in a particular school, that is the only school that student may participate at during the student’s high school activities career.

Any nonpublic or home school student seeking to participate in an extracurricular activity shall be required to provide proof of identity and residence in the same form as a student enrolling in school to establish residency. Additionally, parental permission must be obtained for the student to participate in the extracurricular activity.

Attendance Eligibility for Activities

Students must be in school the day of a scheduled event, unless permission is given by administration. An unexcused student may not participate that day or subsequent days if the activity occurs on a weekend.

Crowd Behavior

The Montana High School Association recognizes the primary obligation incumbent upon the administrators of member schools is to control their students, staff members and fans at all Association Contests.

Decorations

The club sponsor and the administration must approve all decorations and/or posters. Such

decorations and/or posters must be removed following the activity. Outside advertising is allowed with approval of the office of the superintendent. Only masking tape is to be used for putting up decorations. No latex materials or balloons are allowed.

Elections

Student body elections will be held in accordance with the Student Council constitution.

Fundraising Projects

Any school related or outside organization or individual raising funds on school property or on behalf of a school, student activity or organization or individual, must conform to the rules and regulations of the Board/District as outlined below:

- A written plan for any fundraising activity must be presented to the Principal.
- The activity will be permitted following approval of the plan by the Principal.
- Fundraising must take place at such times and place as to not unreasonably interfere with the operation of the school.
- The Helena School District tax identification number may be used only with permission of the District Business Office.
- All equipment and materials purchased by community groups and donated to school programs become the property of the Helena School District.
- The Business Office is responsible for financial administration or review of any funds gifted to a school, program or activity.
- Such gifts may be subject to state and federal law.

Any organization or individual using the Helena School District name, property or students to raise funds for non-district related causes must have approval from the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee. The Board/District assumes no responsibility for the finances of outside organizations.

[See Board Policy: 7070 – School Related Fundraising and Individual or Outside Organizational Fundraising](#)

[See Board Policy 7080 District, School, Student Group Fundraising](#)

Role of Students in School Sponsored Fundraising

At no time shall any student be required to participate in any school sponsored or school related fundraising activity.

Soliciting Funds

Business people and others are not to be solicited by school groups for funds, except after approval by the principals. (Rev. 2.11.92)

Soliciting Among Students

A written plan for any school sponsored fundraising activity involving students must be presented to the Principal. This includes online fundraising activities. The activity will be permitted following approval of the plan by the Principal.

Individual Student Fundraising Accounts

Accounts which track an individual student's fundraising will be accounted for by the extracurricular bookkeeper. Any unused balance in a student's individual account will revert back to the organization's (e.g. Band, Speech and Debate, etc.) main fundraising account. Student account balances may not be transferred to another student or sibling.

Crowdfunding or Online Fundraising

Any fundraising using an online site (e.g. GoFundMe, etc.) must be approved by the Superintendent or designee. Any funds raised through an online crowdfunding site must be mailed to the school NOT an individual person. All monetary donations must be recorded by the Business Manager.

Fundraising Goals

If a student exceeds a fundraising goal or only uses a portion of funds raised for a particular event the balance will revert to the club or organization's (e.g. Band, Speech and Debate, etc.) main fundraising account.

Advances or Loans Prior to Fundraising

At no time are students to seek loans or advances from any individual or organization with the promise of returning or paying back the loan from the club or organization's account.

Identification Cards

All students will be issued one I.D. card at the beginning of the school year. The student while at school and at ALL school activities will carry these cards. Replacement will cost five (\$5.00) dollars.

Meetings of Class and Student Organizations

Faculty sponsors must be present at all meetings of student organizations. The office must be notified of these meetings. A schedule of meetings must be given to the assistant principal for activities.

Travel and Travel Out-of-State or Out-of-Country

Students are subject to the full direction and authority of the coach or advisor while involved in Activity travel. All school regulations concerning student behavior are in effect during activity trips. Students participating in school activities must ride school transportation to and from and during the event.

Students may ride home from an event with a parent or guardian if a building administrator has approved prior arrangements.

Travel Out-of-State or Out-of-Country

The building principal in consultation with the Superintendent must approve any out-of-state or out-of-country travel.

Students who participate in school-sponsored out-of-state or out-of-country travel must have parental / legal guardian permission and provide a completed and signed copy of the "Parent Permission for Out of State or Out of Country Travel". They must also acknowledge in writing the following:

1. **Nature of trip.** A description of and acknowledgment/consent by parents and students regarding the nature of the trip and general travel plans, i.e., a brief factual account of the planned trip.
2. **Inherent risks.** Acknowledgment/Consent by parents and students that there are inherent risks in traveling to such a location.
3. **Conduct rules.** Acknowledgment/Consent by parents and students of the rules that will apply on this trip. You need to identify the rules that will apply on the trip, (i.e., if school rules will apply, that should be stated). Any additional rules should be noted.
4. **Needed Accommodations.** A parent or student must identify any needed accommodations before embarking.
5. **Medical/Health Insurance.** Students must have their own medical/health insurance. Parents must provide documentation of medical/health insurance before the trip.
6. **Trip Insurance.** Parents / guardians must secure “trip insurance” for international travel and in some cases out-of-state travel if it is not included as part of the total cost of the trip. If trip insurance is not purchased and a student purchases a ticket but does not travel, refunds or credits for unused airline tickets will be based on what the airline allows.
7. **Medical Procedures.** The student and parent should authorize the school chaperones to arrange for and, if necessary, to consent to treatment or medical procedures for the student at the parents’ expense. (Release form provided.)
8. **Student Responsibility.** Students and parents should acknowledge in writing the student’s responsibility for his/her own actions. Consequences for not following rules (e.g. leaving the group without permission) should be clearly outlined. (Release form will be provided.).
9. **Release and Indemnification.** The parent and student must release the school district and its agents from all actions not the result of fraud, willful injury or willful or negligent violation of law by an employee. This the standard set by state law.
10. **Early Return of Student Due to Emergency.** A student’s family will be responsible for any costs associated with sending a student home due to an emergency, disciplinary issue or other unforeseen circumstance.

[See Board Policy 2075 – Field Trips](#)

Unsportsmanlike Conduct

Any student or coach ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct from an interscholastic contest by officials will not participate for the remainder of the day and will be ineligible for the next regularly scheduled or rescheduled contest/meet at **that** level of competition and all other games/meets in the interim at any level of competition.

A second violation will result in a four (4) competition suspension in that sport by the offending student/coach. If penalties are imposed at the end of the sport season and no contest remains, the penalty will be imposed for the first contest in **that** particular sport in the next school year.

Spectator Behavior and Sportsmanship

After-school, extra-curricular and co-curricular programs are an extension of the regular school day with all school rules and regulations in effect. The school's reputation should not be placed in jeopardy because of unsportsmanlike behavior. Students and spectators who violate the guidelines will be

suspended from attending games. A meeting with the administration will determine the length of suspension.

What is expected:

- Students in attendance at activities are expected to have fun by demonstrating positive enthusiasm without causing harm, danger or embarrassment to others or the school.
- Students are to follow all rules that are in effect during the school day at after school activities.
- Students are to demonstrate respect toward fellow students, opponents, players, coaches and officials.
- Students are to police their own ranks and demand proper behavior from fellow fans. Students are encouraged to follow the cheerleader's chants and yells.
- Students are expected to demonstrate respect and pride for their high school.
- During the National Anthem; students are to stand, remove their hats, and face the flag, not talk, remain still until the end of the playing of the anthem or until the flags have left the floor.
- "Shirts must be worn at all contests. No body painting, students must be fully clothed. Wear clothing appropriate for a school event. School colors are encouraged." - MHSA
- Proper language is to be used. Do not use profanity in cheers. Trash talking, individual or group vulgarity is unacceptable as is taunting, and other verbal forms of harassment and booing of players, coaches and officials. Positive signs and cheers are encouraged. No "hand held" signs are allowed. Big flags are allowed at outdoor events only. Flags must be kept in front of the home crowd, never on the opposing side. – MHSA
- "Do not advance on to the court or playing field to protest or communicate with officials, coaches or players." – MHSA
- No artificial noisemakers (e.g. thunder sticks, horns, etc.) are allowed at indoor events.
- Work together with cheerleaders for positive chants and yells. Our cheerleaders work hard preparing these cheers.
- Respect is the key to good sportsmanship. Opponents should be respected. They are not enemies, but fellow teenagers who happen to attend other schools. "Do not single out opposing players personally and heckle them by directing derogatory or profane statements/chants at them. Disrespectful behavior of any kind will not be tolerated." - MHSA
- Be modest and humble in victory or defeat. It is easy to be a good winner, and difficult to show class in defeat.
- Do not enter the field or play or court following a game/activity until the visiting team has left the playing area.
- Stand and clap for the school song when played.
- Cheer for our team not against our opponent. "Do not direct offensive cheers/chants at opposing cheering sections. No derogatory, heckling or negative signs or comments to referees, players, coaches, half-time performers or opposing fans." – MHSA
- High school events are a family activity. Be aware that, elementary and middle school students are watching your every move and one day they will take the lead.
- Set a great example.

What Our High Schools Want Most

- A large student turnout at all school events.
- Exemplary sportsmanship from players and fans.
- To be proud of its teams and fans at contests at home and at visitor sites.
- Failure to comply with these rules may result in disciplinary action to include being asked to leave the premises, loss of privileges to attend activities, legal consequences, school discipline to include detention or suspension, forfeiture of activity ticket or any combination thereof.

STUDENT RIGHTS, RESPONSIBILITIES, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Helena School District No. 1 has high academic expectations for all students. The District is committed to providing all students with an excellent, well-rounded educational program. With this commitment in mind, the District sets forth the following:

- All students must be given the opportunity to obtain a basic body of understanding, attitudes, knowledge, and skills needed for living in a democracy and the world community.
- The opportunity for development of intellectual curiosity, critical thinking, problem-solving abilities, and aesthetic appreciation shall be provided.
- The rights and responsibilities provide a uniform standard of conduct which emphasizes the maintenance of an atmosphere where orderly learning is possible and encouraged. It defines student rights, student responsibilities, disciplinary procedures and actions to be taken.

Definitions

The following definitions shall apply to the content of this document:

Student - shall mean a person enrolled and admitted to the high school district of Helena School District No. 1 and as provided by state and federal law.

School Authority - shall mean any District teacher or certified personnel, administrator, or other adult District employee unless specifically stated otherwise.

Students are individuals having a myriad of different personality characteristics, learning strengths, learning needs, emotional needs, and maturity level. Students have the right to considerations because no one method or procedure for learning or discipline can be equally applicable to all.

A student has the right to responsibly contribute information that will be considered when decisions are made that affect the quality and content of their education. The District encourages all students to take responsibility for their education, including preparing for and participating in class and school activities, taking full advantage of learning services provided, helping design their educational goals, conducting themselves respectfully and appropriately.

A student is the center of the school and the purpose for which it is operated and maintained. Students have the inherent right to be treated with dignity and respect. A student has the right to an education without disruption as provided by law and school board policies. Correspondingly, the student has a responsibility not to deny the right to an education to any other student.

A student shall not be excluded, expelled, limited or otherwise discriminated against in the terms, conditions, benefits or privileges of the District educational program or activity, because of race;

creed; religion; gender; marital status; color; age; physical or mental handicap or disability; or national origin, unless based upon lawful grounds, including adopted policies of the Helena Board of Trustees.

A student may not be denied participation in District education programs or any sponsored activity except for such reasons as are provided in the adopted policies of this District; student code, federal, state and county associations or governmental entities; or organizations that sponsor activities, such as the Montana High School Association.

Students have the right to attend classes and to participate in school activities without regard to marital or parental status or pregnancy.

Student Records and Student Information: Notification of Rights under FERPA Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) & Student Records

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day Helena High School receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

Parents or eligible students who wish to ask Helena High School to amend a record should write the school principal clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

By law, both parents, whether married, separated, or divorced, have access to the records of a student who is under 18. A parent whose rights have been legally terminated will be denied access to the records, if the school is given a copy of the court order terminating these rights.

The parent's or student's right of access to, and copies of, student records does not extend to all records. Materials that are not considered educational records, such as teachers' personal notes on a student that are shared only with a substitute teacher, records pertaining to former students of the District, and records maintained by school law enforcement officials for purposes other than school discipline do not have to be made available to the parents or student. Access will also not be granted to the parent or the student to

confidential letters and recommendations concerning admission to a post-secondary educational institution, applications for employment, or receipt of an honor or award, if the student has waived his or her right of access after being advised of his or her right to obtain the names of all persons making such confidential letters or statements.

3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer or contractor outside of the school who performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

A school official includes a person employed by the school or school district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer, contractor, or consultant who, while not employed by the school, performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Helena High School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education

400 Maryland Avenue,
SW Washington, DC 20202

Listed below are disclosures that elementary and secondary schools may make without consent:

FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from students' education records, without consent of the parent or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in 34 C.F.R. 99.31 of the FERPA regulations. Except for disclosures to school officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the parent or eligible student, §99.32 of the FERPA regulations requires the school to record the disclosure.

Parents and eligible students have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosures. A school may disclose PII from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parents or the eligible student –

- To other school officials, including teachers, within the educational agency or institution whom the school has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that the conditions listed in §99.31(a)(1)(i)(B)(1) - (a)(1)(i)(B)(2) are met. (§99.31(a)(1))
- To officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of §99.34. (§99.31(a)(2))
- To authorized representatives of the U. S. Comptroller General, the U. S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the State educational agency in the parent or eligible student's State (SEA). Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of §99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf. (§§99.31(a)(3) and 99.35)
- In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid. (§99.31(a)(4))
- To State and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a State statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released, subject to §99.38. (§99.31(a)(5))

- The District may disclose student records or information to the youth court and law enforcement authorities, pertaining to violations of the Montana Youth Court Act or criminal laws by the student.
- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to: (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer student aid programs; or (c) improve instruction. (§99.31(a)(6))
- To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions. (§99.31(a)(7))
- To parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes. (§99.31(a)(8))
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena. (§99.31(a)(9))
- To caseworkers or other Child Protective Services representatives when DPHHS/CPS is legally responsible for the care and protection of the student. 20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(L).
- The District may disclose student records in a court proceeding where the parent is a party to an action involving child abuse or neglect or dependency matters without parental consent or notification if ordered to make this disclosure.
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to §99.36. (§99.31(a)(10))
- Information the school has designated as “directory information” under §99.37. (§99.31(a)(11))

Privacy Matters – Photographs and Social Media

Because of the advent of cell phones and social media, it has become almost impossible to fully protect the privacy rights of any individual from having his or her picture taken and shared with others. Parents have the right to annually opt out of having the District share their child’s photograph in publications or through District media events. The District will honor any parent opt-outs and not share this information. However, the District cannot prevent others who are present from sharing photos and videos from school events open to parents and/or the public, including but not limited to public performances, dress rehearsals, music performances, sporting events, athletic practices open to the public, athletic competitions, open assemblies, or field trips.

Notice for Directory Information

The *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act* (FERPA), a Federal law, requires that Helena Public Schools with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child’s education records. However, Helena Public Schools may disclose appropriately designated “directory information” without written consent, unless you have advised the District to the contrary in accordance with District procedures. The primary purpose of

directory information is to allow the Helena Public Schools to include this type of information from your child's education records in certain school publications. Examples include:

- A playbill, showing your student's role in a drama production;
- The annual yearbook;
- Honor roll or other recognition lists;
- Student directories;
- Graduation programs; and
- Sports activity sheets, such as for wrestling, showing weight and height of team members.

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the *Every Child Succeeds Act (ESSA)* to provide military recruiters, upon request, with the following information – names, addresses and telephone listings – unless parents have advised the LEA that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent.¹

If you do not want the Helena Public Schools to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the District in writing by the **third Friday in November**. Helena Public Schools have designated the following information as directory information:

- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| ○ Student's name | ● Address |
| ○ Telephone listing | ● Electronic mail address |
| ○ Photograph | ● Date of birth |
| ○ Dates of attendance | ● Grade level |
| ○ Participation in officially recognized activities and sports | |

See: Directory Information Opt Out form on page 121.

Notification of Rights Under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)

PPRA affords parents certain rights regarding our conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right to:

- *Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey") if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (ED)–*
 1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent;
 2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
 3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
 4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
 5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
 6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
 7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or

8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.
- *Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of –*
 1. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
 2. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, or vision screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
 3. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.
 - *Inspect, upon request and before administration or use –*
 1. Protected information surveys of students;
 2. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
 3. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

These rights transfer from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law. Helena Public Schools have developed and adopted policies regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes.

Helena High School will directly notify parents via the District web site of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. Helena High School will also directly notify, such as through U.S. Mail or email, parents of students who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys noted below and will provide an opportunity for the parent to opt his or her child out of participation of the specific activity or survey. Helena High School will make this notification to parents at the beginning of the school year if the District has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys listed below and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out of such activities and surveys.

Parents will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys. Following is a list of the specific activities and surveys covered under this requirement:

- Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution.
- Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by ED.
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with: Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20202

[See: Board Policy 2020 Student and Family Privacy Rights](#)

Surveys

Parents have the right to inspect any survey or evaluation and refuse to allow their child to participate in such survey or evaluation that does not require the collection of personally identifiable information and is not necessary and essential for establishing the student's education record or validating an achievement test for admission to a postsecondary institution.

Parents have the right to opt their student in to a survey or data collection that requires the collection of personally identifiable information and is not necessary and essential for establishing the student's education record or validating an achievement test for admission to a postsecondary institution.

Military &/or Other Recruiter Opt-Out Notification

Helena Public Schools

Military and Other Recruiter Opt-Out Notification 2025-2026 School Year

Federal law requires the school district to provide military recruiters, upon request, with the name, address and telephone number of each secondary school student unless the student or student's parent has advised the district that this information is not to be disclosed.

In order to have your student's directory information withheld, please note the following:

- A request to withhold directory information must be in writing. You may use the form provided (see page: 121) or appropriate forms from other sources. A request may also be hand-written.
- This request will apply only to the release of directory information to military recruiters or other recruiters. Requests to suppress directory information used for other purposes (such as student publications, colleges and universities, class rings, and yearbooks) are not covered by this notification. Such requests must be filed directly with the school
- Requests for suppression of directory information will be maintained until notification requesting a change is received.
- Parents and students may sign this form. The parent signature must be on request for students who are under the age of 18. For students who are 18 years of age or older, the student must sign the request.
- Written requests to withhold directory information should be submitted by third Friday in November.
- Requests should be sent directly to Mr. Brett Zanto, Capital High School Principal, Mr. Brian Kessler, Helena High School Principal, Mr. Matt Carey, PAL Principal or Mr. Rex Weltz, Superintendent of Helena Public Schools.

These laws are: Section 9528 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 7908) and 10 U.S.C. § 503(c)

Bullying, Intimidation, Harassment & Hazing Prevention and Reporting Policy

Bullying (including cyberbullying), harassment, intimidation, or hazing, by students, staff, or third parties, is strictly prohibited and shall not be tolerated. Bullying does not include the determination after an investigation that the student's used reasonable and necessary physical force as self-defense or the defense of another in response to a physical attack.

All complaints about behavior that may violate this policy shall be promptly investigated.

Retaliation is prohibited against any person who reports or is thought to have reported a violation, files a complaint, or otherwise participates in an investigation or inquiry.

[See: Board Policy 3005 – Bullying, Intimidation, Harassment & Hazing Prevention and Reporting Policy](#)

Non-Discrimination Notice

The Helena School District #1 strives to comply with all federal and state rules and regulations. The Helena Public Schools do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The District is required by federal law, including but not limited to the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX, and Section 504, and the Americans with Disabilities Act and their regulations to not discriminate against individuals in violation of these laws. This holds true for all students who are interested in participating in education programs and/or extracurricular school activities. Inquiries regarding compliance and/or grievance procedures may be directed to the school district's Title IX officer and/or Section 504/ADA Coordinators who have been designated to handle inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies:

Helena High School

Brian Kessler, Principal
Title IX Building Coordinator
1300 Billings Avenue
Helena, MT 59601
406-324-2200

Capital High School

Brett Zanto, Principal
Title IX Building Coordinator
100 Valley Drive
Helena, MT 59601
406-324-2500

Helena High School

Julie TeNyenhuis, Ryan Swenson
Section 504 / ADA Coordinators
1300 Billings Avenue
Helena, MT 59601
406-324-2200

Capital High School

Mick Morris, Kathy Kidder
Section 504 / ADA Coordinators
100 Valley Drive
Helena, MT 59601

Inquiries may also be directed to the Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education.

Right to Equal Educational Opportunities, Title IX, Section 504, American with Disabilities Act

Equal Educational Opportunities

Equal educational and extracurricular opportunities shall be available for all students without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, religious beliefs, physical and mental handicap or disability, or actual or potential marital or parental status. The District will not knowingly enter into agreements with any entity or any individual that discriminates against students on the basis of sex or any other protected status. Any student may file a discrimination grievance by using the Uniform Grievance Procedure.

No student shall, on the basis of sex, be denied equal access to programs, activities, services, or benefits or be limited in the exercise of any right, privilege, advantage, or denied equal access to educational and extracurricular programs and activities. Any student may file a sex equity complaint by using the Uniform Grievance Procedure.

Inquiries regarding discrimination of any kind should be directed to the District's Title IX Coordinator, who shall provide information and, if necessary, direct the individual to the Uniform Grievance Procedure. The District will annually publish notice of these rights to students and parents.

Title IX Grievance Procedures

The Helena School District has adopted internal grievance procedures providing for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any action prohibited by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 Act (Title IX). Title IX prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs or activities operated by public school districts. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination. District does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its education programs and activities.

All references to sex discrimination throughout these procedures include gender-based harassment and sexual harassment. Gender-based harassment may include acts of verbal, nonverbal, or physical aggression, intimidation, or hostility based on sex or sex-stereotyping, even if those acts do not involve conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment can occur whenever an individual makes sexual advances, requests sexual favors, and engages in other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual or sex-based nature, imposed on the basis of sex, that:

In the case of a student, denies or limits the provision of educational aid, benefits, services, or treatment; or that makes such conduct a condition of a student's academic status; or in the case of an employee denies or limits the employment, recruitment, consideration, or selection or treatment, or that makes such conduct a condition of the employee's employment status; OR

Has the purpose or effect of:

- substantially interfering with a student's educational environment or employee's work environment.;
- creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational or work environment;
- depriving a student of educational aid, benefits, services, or treatment; or depriving an employee of the benefits of or deprives that employee of employment opportunities; or
- making submission to or rejection of such conduct the basis for academic decisions affecting a student or employment decisions affecting an employee.

Sexual harassment includes sexual violence. Sexual violence refers to physical sexual acts perpetrated against a person's will or where a person is incapable of giving consent due to the victim's use of drugs or alcohol or is unable to give consent due to an intellectual or other disability. Sexually violent acts include rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, and sexual coercion.

Sexual harassment is conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

1. Quid pro quo: An employee of the recipient conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the recipient on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct.
2. Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the recipient's education program or activity;

or

3. "Sexual assault" as defined in 20 U.S.C. 1092(f)(6)(A)(v), "dating violence" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(10), "domestic violence" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(8), , or "stalking" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(30).

A determination of responsibility resulting from a formal complaint against a student for engaging in sexual harassment will result in appropriate disciplinary action, according to the nature of the offense. Complaints may be submitted via the District's Title IX Grievance Procedure. Please refer to [3005 Bullying, Intimidation, Harassment, Hazing Prevention and Reporting Policy](#) for additional information regarding the District's prohibition against discrimination and harassment.

District Title IX Coordinator

Inquiries concerning the application of Title IX may be referred to the District's Title IX Coordinator:

Human Resources Director
1325 Poplar St.
Helena, MT 59601
406.324.2010

Inquiries may also be referred to the Office of Civil Rights, United States Department of Education.

Filing a Complaint

An individual believing that he or she has been the victim of sex discrimination should file a complaint with the Title IX Coordinator within 30 days of the incident(s) giving rise to the allegations. If the individual wishes to invoke the formal complaint procedures the complaint should be made in writing. An individual wishing to invoke the informal resolution process may make a complaint in writing or verbally.

An individual wishing to make a complaint will be provided with a copy of both the informal resolution procedure and the formal complaint procedures.

Section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

It is the intent of the District to ensure that students who are disabled within the definition of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are identified, evaluated, and provided with appropriate educational services.

For those students who need or are believed to need special instruction and/or related services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the District has established and implemented a system of procedural safeguards. Safeguards include a students' identification, evaluation, and educational placement.

This system includes notice, an opportunity for the student's parent or legal guardian to examine relevant records, an impartial hearing with opportunity for participation by the student's parent or legal guardian, and a review process.

School District No. 1 has appointed an officer to assist any employee, student, parent, or legal guardian with a Section 504/ADA concern. Inquiries concerning Section 504/ADA may be referred to the Central Administration Office, 1325 Poplar Street, Helena, Montana, 59601, or may be made by calling 1-406-324-2010.

Procedures have been established for addressing any questions or concerns and for resolving any conflicts relating to Title IX/Section 504/ ADA that may be raised by an employee, student, parent, or legal guardian in School District No. 1. A copy of those procedures may be obtained from building Principals or the Central Administration Office.

[See: Board Policy 2050 – Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1972 \(Section 504\).](#)

Sex-Based Harassment

The District encourages parental and student support in its efforts to address and prevent sex-based harassment in the public schools. Students and/or parents are encouraged to discuss their questions or concerns about the expectations in this area with the District's Title IX coordinator.

Sex-based harassment is a form of sex discrimination and means sexual harassment and other harassment on the basis of sex, including on the basis of sex stereotypes, sex characteristics, pregnancy or related conditions, sexual orientation, and gender identity, that is:

- (1) *Quid pro quo harassment.* An employee, agent, or other person authorized by the recipient to provide an aid, benefit, or service under the recipient's education program or activity explicitly or impliedly conditioning the provision of such an aid, benefit, or service on a person's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;
- (2) *Hostile environment harassment.* Unwelcome sex-based conduct that, based on the totality of the circumstances, is subjectively and objectively offensive and is so severe or pervasive that it limits or denies a person's ability to participate in or benefit from the recipient's education

program or activity (*i.e.*, creates a hostile environment). Whether a hostile environment has been created is a fact-specific inquiry that includes consideration of the following:

- (i) The degree to which the conduct affected the complainant's ability to access the recipient's education program or activity;
 - (ii) The type, frequency, and duration of the conduct;
 - (iii) The parties' age, roles within the recipient's education program or activity, previous interactions, and other factors about each party that may be relevant to evaluating the effects of the conduct;
 - (iv) The location of the conduct and the context in which the conduct occurred; and
 - (v) Other sex-based harassment in the recipient's education program or activity; or
- (3) *Specific offenses.*
- (i) Sexual assault meaning an offense classified as a forcible or nonforcible sex offense under the uniform crime reporting system of the Federal Bureau of Investigation;
 - (ii) Dating violence meaning violence committed by a person:
 - (A) Who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim; and
 - (B) Where the existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on a consideration of the following factors:
 - (1) The length of the relationship;
 - (2) The type of relationship; and
 - (3) The frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship;
 - (iii) Domestic violence meaning felony misdemeanor crimes committed by a person who:
 - (A) Is a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim under the family or domestic violence laws of the jurisdiction of the recipient, or a person similarly situation to a spouse of the victim;
 - (B) Is cohabitating, or has cohabitated, with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner;
 - (C) Shares a child in common with the victim; or
 - (D) Commits acts against a youth or adult victim who is protected from those acts under the family or domestic violence laws of the jurisdiction; or
 - (iv) Stalking meaning engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to:
 - (A) Fear for the person's safety or the safety of others; or
 - (B) Suffer substantial emotional distress.

A determination of responsibility resulting from a formal complaint against a student for engaging in sex-based harassment will result in appropriate disciplinary action, according to the nature of the offense.

Complaints may be submitted via the District's Title IX Grievance Procedure. Please refer to Policies [3000 Equal Educational Opportunities](#) and [3005 Bullying, Intimidation, Harassment, Hazing Prevention and Reporting Policy](#) or additional information regarding the District's prohibition against discrimination and harassment.

Academic Integrity

This section establishes clear guidelines regarding academic integrity, specifically addressing the use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools by students and plagiarism. It ensures that all academic work reflects original thought and learning, and that AI is used ethically and transparently. Engaging in dishonesty in academic work, including but not limited to plagiarism, cheating, unauthorized use of artificial intelligence (AI) or artificial generative intelligence (AGI) applications to complete schoolwork, submitting work generated by AI or AGI as original work, or any other form of academic dishonesty is a violation of the Code of Conduct.

❖ Definition of Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of presenting someone else's work, ideas, or expressions as one's own without proper acknowledgment. This includes:

- Copying text from sources (including AI-generated content) without citation
- Paraphrasing ideas without proper attribution
- Submitting work written by others, including peers or AI tools, as original

❖ Use of AI Tools by Students

- AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Grammarly, Quillbot, etc.) can support learning but must be used ethically. The following guidelines apply:

Permissible Use:

- Brainstorming ideas or generating prompts
- Improving grammar and syntax, with acknowledgment
- Practicing skills with oversight from educators

Prohibited Use:

- Submitting AI-generated content as original work without attribution
- Using AI to complete entire assignments or essays without **substantial** human contribution
- Using AI to circumvent the learning process (e.g., solving problems without understanding)

Required Disclosure:

- Students must clearly disclose any significant use of AI in their work.
- Example: "Portions of this assignment were generated with the help of ChatGPT and then revised for clarity and accuracy."

Consequences for Misuse:

- 1st offense: Revision and resubmission of work
- 2nd offense: Revision and resubmission of work with a grade reduction
- 3rd offense: Disciplinary action for repeated or serious offenses. Possible loss of credit for the assignment.

This procedure was created with the assistance of AI, ChatGPT, 6.19.2025

CURRICULUM: HUMAN SEXUALITY OR IDENTITY INSTRUCTION

A parent, guardian, or other person who is responsible for the care of a student may refuse to allow the student to attend or may withdraw the students from human sexuality instruction. The withdrawal or refusal to attend is an excused absence. Human sexuality instruction is instruction that has the goal or purpose of studying, exploring, or informing students about intimate relationships, sexual anatomy,

sexual reproduction, sexually transmitted infections, sexual acts, abstinence, contraception, or reproductive rights and responsibilities. These absences do not count toward the student's discretionary 10-day total.

Written consent from the parent or legal guardian is required prior to any student attending identity instruction. Identity instruction is instruction that has the goal or purpose of studying, exploring, or informing students about gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation. A student is excused from not attending identity instruction unless the student's parent/guardian provided written consent for the student to be in attendance prior to the instruction.

The District will provide parents/guardians with at least five (5) school days' notice (but not more than 14 school days notice) before human sexuality or identity instruction is scheduled to occur.

[See Board Policy: 2016 Human Sexuality Instruction.](#)

Special Education Services

Helena Public School District #1 is committed to the rights of ALL children and to providing specially designed programming to meet their individual needs.

A child's educational future depends on active parent participation and commitment to this important educational process. It is important to take an active role to ensure that your child, if eligible, fully benefits from the many Special Education services available in Helena. If you are concerned with your child's progress in school, please contact the appropriate school staff and share your concerns.

Pre K -12 Child Find

(IDEA) requires Helena Public School District #1 to have a practical method to locate, evaluate, and identify all children who have a disability and need special education and related services.

Child Find includes:

- Preschool transition from the IDEA Part C Early Intervention Program;
- Preschool screening activities which reach out to the community at large, including private and home schools, as well as local Head Start programs; and
- School-based pre-referral activities for school-age students (K – 12th grade).

Preschool Child Find Clinics, for children aged 3 to 5, are scheduled 4 times a year to identify, locate, and evaluate all children suspected of having a disability. Screening is by appointment only and can be made by calling 324-2020.

Special Education K-12th Grade Programming

Helena Public School District #1 offers a continuum of special education services in each of our elementary, middle and high schools for children who have been identified with a disability and are eligible for special education and related service under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). IF you are concerned with your child's progress in school, please contact the appropriate school staff and share your concerns.

Screening Services for Helena Students

Speech & Language - Kindergarten students may be screened for speech and language problems based on consultation between the educator and the speech language pathologist.

Vision & Hearing – Pre K – 12th Grade students may be screened for vision & hearing concerns based on consultation between the educator, school nurse and/or speech language pathologist (hearing).

Academic - Students K - 12 will be screened through the referral process for any academic difficulties.

Methods of screening may include checklists, observations, and formal instruments. Parents will be notified of any unusual performance and recommendations will be offered for further evaluation.

For further information contact the Special Education Office at 324-2005.

Student Expression

Students enjoy the right of expression as provided by state and federal law. The student may not, by speech or conduct, materially disrupt class work or educational programs; cause substantial disorder or invasion of the rights of others; or substantially interfere with the requirements of appropriate discipline, education programs or other activities in the operation of the school.

The use of vulgar, offensive, lewd or indecent speech or conduct is prohibited in the District.

Student Assemblies

Students have the right to participate in school-sponsored assemblies. Continuation of student assemblies is contingent upon the ability of students to conduct themselves properly at all times.

During a school assembly students shall:

1. Remain quiet and attentive during the entire program;
2. Be courteous regardless of the program;
3. Remain in their places until they have been dismissed by school staff;
4. Refrain from whistling, talking or other acts of discourtesy.

Student Bulletin Announcements

Students have the right to place announcements in the daily bulletin. Students desiring to place an announcement shall retain a form for the announcement and receive prior authorization from the school building administration.

Student Meetings

The District provides a **limited open forum** as defined by the federal Equal Access Act. Limited open forum allows one or more non-curriculum-related student groups to meet on school premises during the non-instructional time of the school day.

Non-instructional time shall mean time set aside by the school one half hour before actual classroom instruction begins, one half hour after actual classroom instruction ends, or during the student lunch period. For the purpose of student meetings non-instructional time must only be on days when school is in session.

Any student desiring to initiate a student meeting on non-instructional time shall notify the school building Principal in writing of their desire to meet, reason of the meeting, number of participants and expected meeting time. The Principal shall provide students such necessary requirements as to comply with the provisions of the policies of the District.

Student(s) may conduct a meeting on school premises during non-instructional time within the limited open forum on the basis of religious, political, philosophical, or other content.

A student may conduct such a meeting provided:

1. The meeting is voluntary and student initiated;
2. The meeting does not materially or substantially interfere with the orderly conduct of educational activities within the school;
3. There is no school sponsorship of meetings;
4. The meetings take place during non-instructional time; and
5. Visitors do not direct, conduct, control or regularly attend the activities of the student group.

Visitors - shall mean individuals who are not employees, school personnel or students of Helena School District No. 1.

Non-curriculum student groups shall be limited to one visitor at the initial organizational meeting, at a time set by the school building Principal. Visitors desiring to attend the initial meeting must receive written permission by the school building Principal prior to attending any student initiated meeting.

The District reserves the right and responsibility to:

1. Maintain order and discipline on school premises for limited open forum activities,
2. Protect the well-being of students, District personnel and property, and
3. Assure voluntary attendance of students at all meetings.

Note: Board Policy regulates facility use during times when school is not in session. ([See: Board Policy: 4330 Rentals and Use of School Facilities](#)) Such facility use shall require the completion of a facility use contract with the Principal of the facility. Contracts are available through the office of the building Principal or the District Business Office, 1325 Poplar St.

Student Publications

Prior to distribution in school or on school premises, a copy of all school sponsored and non-school sponsored student publications shall be provided to the school building Principal or designee. The Principal or designee may prohibit distribution of publications that are lewd, obscene, inflammatory or vulgar. Distribution of publications may also be prohibited if such publication shall substantially or materially disrupt the education process of other students or school activities.

Student publications which are submitted to the Principal and not otherwise prohibited from distribution may be distributed in school or on school premises except:

1. In a hallway, doorway, or other area where such distribution shall interfere with the physical movement of students or other persons; or
2. In a classroom, unless the student has received specific permission from the teacher.

Student Produced Media

Students who produce media for a class and/or school related or school sponsored event may not use vulgar, offensive, defaming, lewd or indecent speech or visual forms. Student produced media will be reviewed by the class instructor or event sponsor and the instructor or sponsor reserves the right to prohibit broadcast or distribution in any form.

Violation of these rules shall subject the student to Disciplinary and Conduct Codes.

Teacher Abuse

Any parent, guardian, or other person who shall insult or abuse a teacher anywhere on the school grounds or school premises shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction of such misdemeanor by a court of competent jurisdiction, shall be fined no less than \$25 or more than \$500. (20-4-303, MCA, 2005)

Uniform Grievance Procedure to Solve Complaints

Usually student or parent complaints or concerns can be addressed simply — by a phone call or a conference with the teacher. For those complaints and concerns that cannot be handled so easily, the District has adopted a [Policy 1085 Uniform Complaint Procedure policy](#) for most complaints with the exception of complaints/concerns regarding involving challenges to educational material, those governed by a specified procedure in state or federal law that supersedes a uniform grievance process, and those about sex discrimination and/or disability discrimination.

The District will endeavor to respond to and resolve complaints without resorting to this formal complaint procedure and, when a complaint is filed, to address the complaint as outlined in this policy. The right of a person to prompt and equitable resolution of a complaint filed hereunder will not be impaired by a person's pursuit of other remedies. Use of this complaint procedure is not a prerequisite to pursue other remedies and use of this complaint procedure does not extend any filing deadline related to pursuit of other remedies.

The District requires that all individuals use this complaint procedure when the individual believes the Board or its employees or agents have violated the individual's rights under state or federal law or Board policy. Complaints against a building administrator shall be filed with the appropriate Assistant Superintendent. Complaints against a District level administrator shall be filed with the Superintendent. Complaints against the Superintendent or Clerk shall be filed with the Board.

When a complaint alleges sexual harassment or a violation of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (the Civil Rights Act), Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the building administrator shall turn the complaint over to the applicable District nondiscrimination coordinator. The coordinator shall ensure an investigation is completed in accordance with the applicable procedure. In the case of a sexual harassment or a Title IX complaint the applicable investigation and appeal procedure is Policy 3000 or 5005. In the case of a disability complaint, the coordinator shall complete an investigation and file a report and recommendation with the building administrator for decision. Appeal of a decision in a disability complaint will be handled in accordance with this policy.

Deadlines requiring District action in this procedure may be extended for reasons related but not limited to the District's retention of legal counsel and District investigatory procedures. Additional timelines may be waived with the agreement of both parties.

A decision of the Board is final, unless it is appealed pursuant to Montana law within the period provided by law.

[For more detailed information see Board Policy: 1085 Uniform Complaint Procedure.](#)

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES AND CONDUCT CODES

Threat Assessment Protocol

The safety of all students and staff is a priority for the Helena Public Schools. A threat assessment protocol has been designed for use with students who are engaged in circumstances that are determined to suggest harmful or dangerous behavior.

The following objectives are key components of the process:

- Identify and screen threats to determine the action required.
- Conduct Behavioral Threat Assessments for threats determined to be viable.
- Organize resources and intervention strategies based on the level of concern to manage situations that involve students that pose threats to other students, the staff and/or themselves.
- Maintain a culture of safety among students, teachers and parents and foster a learning environment that is free from harmful or dangerous behavior.

Parents will be informed and involved throughout the process.

Student Code of Conduct

Students are expected to conduct themselves within the bounds set by the Board and the administrative regulations set forth by the Superintendent. Consideration for the rights and well-being of others, cooperation with all members of the school community and respect for oneself and others are the basic principles guiding student behavior.

The primary responsibility for student discipline within the school rests with the Principal or their designee. The primary responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within the classroom lies with the individual classroom teacher.

Corporal punishment shall not be used. Corporal punishment does not include reasonable force as needed to maintain safety for students, staff, or other persons, or for the purpose of self-defense or defense of property.

Disciplinary action may be taken against any student in violation of the Student Code of Conduct. Disciplinary action may range from conferring with a teacher to expulsion from school. Continued infractions will have a cumulative effect in terms of disciplinary action.

Students who violate local, state or federal laws are referred to law enforcement.

A student is in violation of the Student Code of Conduct if the student engages in any inappropriate behavior, including but not limited to:

1. Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling tobacco, vapor products, or marijuana products (tobacco includes, but is not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, snuff, smoking tobacco, smokeless tobacco, alternative nicotine product, or any other tobacco or nicotine innovation; marijuana products include but are not limited to edible products, ointments, tinctures, marijuana derivatives, marijuana concentrates, and marijuana intended for use by smoking or vaping);
2. Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling alcoholic beverages or alcohol innovations..
3. Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling illegal drugs or controlled substances, marijuana (including medical marijuana), look-alike drugs, and drug paraphernalia.
4. Using, possessing, controlling, or transferring a weapon in violation of the “Possession of a Weapon in a School Building” section of this policy.
5. Using, possessing, controlling, or transferring any object that reasonably could be considered or used as a weapon.
6. Disobeying directives from staff or disobeying rules governing student conduct.
7. Using violence, force, coercion, intimidation or other comparable conduct toward anyone or urging other students to engage in such conduct.
8. Causing or attempting to cause damage to, or stealing or attempting to steal, school property or another person’s property.
9. Engaging in any activity that constitutes an interference with school purposes or an educational function or any other disruptive activity.
10. Unexcused absenteeism.
11. Misconduct of any sort on any means of District transportation.
12. Bullying, hazing, harassment (including sexual harassment), intimidation, including cyberbullying.
13. Forging any signature or making any false entry or attempting to authorize any document used or intended to be used in connection with the operation of a school.

These grounds stated above for disciplinary action apply whenever a student’s conduct is reasonably related to school or school activities, including, but not limited to the circumstances set forth below:

1. On, or within sight of, school grounds before, during, or after school hours or at any other time when school is being used by a school group;
2. Off school grounds at a school-sponsored activity or event or any activity or event that bears a reasonable relationship to school;
3. Travel to and from school or a school activity, function, or event;
4. Anywhere if conduct may reasonably be considered to be a threat or an attempted intimidation of a staff member, an interference with school purposes or an educational function, a threat to the safety and welfare of the student population, or conduct that detrimentally effects the climate or efficient operations of the school.

[See also Board Policy: 3050 Student Discipline](#)

Weapons

Gun Free Schools / Firearms

The Board is obligated to expel any student who uses, possesses, controls, or transfers a firearm for a definite period of time of at least one (1) calendar year, except that the Board may permit the Superintendent to modify the disciplinary action. The Board hereby authorizes the Superintendent to modify the disciplinary action on a case-by-case basis, including eliminating the requirement for expulsion. The administrator may immediately suspend a student if, prior to a hearing, there is cause to believe the student brought a firearm to school or possessed a firearm at school. The student may not be expelled unless the trustees find that the student knowingly brought a firearm to school or possessed a firearm at school.

Possession of a Weapon in a School Building

The Board will follow federal law for any student who uses, possesses, controls, or transfers a firearm on school property. The Board hereby authorizes the Superintendent to modify the disciplinary action on a case-by-case basis, including eliminating the requirement for expulsion.

The administrator may immediately suspend a student if, prior to a hearing, there is cause to believe the student brought a firearm to school or possessed a firearm at school. In the case of a firearm violation the student may be expelled if the trustees find that the student knowingly brought a firearm to school or possessed a firearm at school.

[See also Board Policy: 3050 Student Discipline](#)

Consideration of Extenuating Circumstances

School authority shall consider extenuating circumstances prior to dispensing disciplinary action. Extenuating circumstances include, but are not limited to:

1. Seriousness of the offense.
2. Program placement.
3. Attitude and age of the student.
4. Pattern of conduct.
5. Degree of cooperation.
6. Other educational relevant circumstance.

Corrective Actions – Definitions

The following definitions shall apply to the Code of Conduct:

Detention

Shall mean a student is required to attend school in a predetermined location for at least 30 minutes. Student must serve detention as assigned by the teacher or administrator. Generally, a student will be given twenty-four (24) hour notice prior to serving detention.

Disciplinary Reassignment

Shall mean disciplinary action that may include transfer of the student to another room, program or alternative placement for a specific time.

Corrective Disciplinary Action

Shall mean school authority must administer the defined disciplinary action, provided in the student code, as a result of the violation(s) of the student code(s).

Minimum corrective action

Shall mean the school authority must administer at least the specified corrective action provided for each code violation.

Maximum corrective action

Shall mean the school authority may not exceed the degree of disciplinary action provided for the specific code violation. School authority may administer such corrective disciplinary action between the minimum and maximum after consideration of mitigating and aggravating circumstances provided. The degree of the severity (from the least to the most severe) of corrective disciplinary action is described as follows:

- Warning
- Teacher-Student conference
- Detention
- School Community-Service or Monetary fine
- Administrator-teacher-parent-student conference
- Reassignment
- In-school suspension (including loss of privilege to participate in extracurricular and co-curricular activities)
- Out-of-school suspension (including loss of privilege to participate in extracurricular and co-curricular activities and district sponsored transportation)
- Police notification/criminal process referral
- Expulsion
- Reimbursement / Restitution

Expulsion

Expulsion is any removal of a student for more than twenty (20) school days without the provision of educational services. Only the Board may expel a student from school.

All privileges to participate in any co-curricular or extracurricular activity in the Helena Public Schools are revoked when expulsion is directed by the Board of Trustees.

[See: Board Policy 3055 – Student Due Process Rights.](#)

Out-of-School Suspension

The term of an out-of-school suspension may vary depending upon the circumstances. A student may be suspended out-of-school for an initial term not to exceed ten (10) school days. Upon a finding by an administrator, after an informal hearing with the student, that the immediate return to school would be detrimental to the health, welfare or safety of others, or would be disruptive of the educational process, a student may be suspended out-of-school for an additional term not to exceed ten (10) school days.

Make-up Work during Suspension or Expulsion

Whether a student is allowed make-up work during a suspension or expulsion will be determined by the building administration.

Law Enforcement Roles and School Searches

For the safety and supervision of students in the absence of parents, to maintain discipline and order in schools, and to provide for the health, safety and welfare of students and staff, school authorities are authorized to conduct searches of students and their personal effects, as well as School District property. Such authorization includes, but is not limited to, the use of canines for searches of school property, personal property and motor vehicles.

[See: Board Policy: 3040 Search & Seizures](#)

Evidence produced by a search may be used in a disciplinary proceeding against the student.

The District has a responsibility for the health and safety of its students during the school day, at all extra-curricular activities and events, and all activities conducted on school premises. Use or possession of drugs, alcohol, tobacco and tobacco innovations, controlled substances, medications (including over-the-counter medications without permission), any other illegal drug, and/or drug paraphernalia on school property pose a serious risk to health and safety to students, employees and visitors. Possession and use of weapons on school grounds poses an additional risk to the health and safety of students, employees and visitors.

To protect students, employees, and visitors from these risks, it is necessary to conduct searches of persons and property under certain, limited circumstances. Such searches are necessary to: deter the presence and possession of prohibited substances and items; deter drug and alcohol abuse among the student population; to educate students as to the serious physical, mental and emotional harm caused by drug and alcohol abuse; to prevent injury, illness and harm as result of drug, alcohol abuse and/or weapons; to help identify student drug use and assist parents in pursuing evaluation and appropriate counseling; and to maintain a safe environment free of weapons, alcohol and drug use.

Searches may be carried out to recover stolen property, to detect illegal substances or weapons, or to mitigate or eliminate risks to and disruption of a safe and healthy educational environment. In keeping with these goals, the Board authorizes school authorities to conduct reasonable searches of school property and equipment, as well as of students and their personal effects, to maintain health, safety, and security in the schools.

Students and Their Personal Effects

School authorities may search a student, the student's property, or District property under the student's control, when there is reasonable suspicion that the search will produce evidence the student has violated or is violating either the law, Board policy, administrative regulation or the District's student conduct rules. Contractors may be employed by the District to handle trained dogs to assist in this search. Reasonable suspicion shall be based on the specific and objective facts that the search will produce evidence related to the alleged violation. The types of property that may be searched by school officials include but are not limited to lockers, desks, purses, backpacks, vehicles parked on school property or other electronic communication devices.

Cell phones or other electronic communication devices may be confiscated but may not be searched without student or parent permission. If consent to search is denied, law enforcement will be contacted and they may seek a warrant allowing them to search the contents of the phone. If consent is given and potential criminal conduct is discovered law enforcement will be contacted.

Immediately following a search, a written report shall be made by the school authority who conducted the search. The report shall be submitted to the Principal and forwarded to the Superintendent. The parent of the student shall be notified of the search as soon as possible.

Vehicles Parked on School Property

Parking on District property is a privilege for all students. Students may not use, transport, carry, or possess alcohol, illegal drugs or any weapons in their vehicles on school property. While on school property, vehicles may be inspected at any time by staff, or by contractors employed by the District utilizing trained dogs, for the presence of alcohol, illegal drugs, drug paraphernalia, or weapons. In the event the school has reason to believe that alcohol, drugs, drug paraphernalia, or weapons are present, including by alert-trained dogs, the student's vehicle will be searched, and the student expressly consents to such a search by parking on District property. Notice provisions for students will be contained in the student handbook annually.

In addition, by exercising the privilege of parking in the school parking lots, the student acknowledges that the student does not have any expectation of privacy in the odors emanating from the student's vehicle which may alert a human or a canine to the presence of alcohol, illegal drugs, drug paraphernalia or weapons. By exercising the privilege of parking in the school parking lot, the student consents to having the vehicle searched if the school authorities have any other reasonable suspicion to believe that a violation of school rules or policy has occurred.

School Property

School property, including, but not limited to, desks and lockers, is owned and controlled by the District and may be searched by school authorities at any time. School authorities are authorized to conduct area-wide, general administrative inspections of school property without notice to or consent of the student and without reasonable suspicion.

Seizure of Property

If a search produces evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the District's policies or rules, such evidence may be seized and impounded by school authorities, and disciplinary action may be taken. When appropriate, such evidence may be transferred to law enforcement authorities.

Reasonable Suspicion

Shall mean that there are reasonable factual grounds for suspecting that the search will turn up evidence the student has violated or is violating local, state or federal law or rule of the District. Reasonable suspicion requires that independent facts exist and are articulated. Reasonable suspicion may be formed by considering factors which may include the following:

- a. Eye witness observation by school personnel; and/or
- b. Information received from a reliable source; and/or
- c. Suspicious behavior by the student coupled with the student's past history and school record.

Personal, Locker, Canine-Assisted, and Automobile Search Procedures

A student's person and/or personal effects (e.g. purse, book bag, etc.) may be searched when a school authority has reasonable suspicion to believe the student is in possession of illegal, unauthorized or contraband (stolen) items in violation of school rules or local, state or federal law.

Locker Searches

Student lockers, contents and secured personal property may be searched without prior notice given to the student when the school authority has reasonable suspicion that the locker contains illegal, unauthorized or contraband items or in case of an emergency requiring immediate access to the locker or other secured personal property. Searches shall, whenever possible be conducted in the presence of an adult witness and the given student. School lockers are temporarily assigned to students. Lockers remain the property of the School District at all times. The District has a reasonable and valid interest in insuring that lockers are properly maintained for safety and health reasons.

All Helena High School lockers are locked with HHS locks. Students must bring their own lock to the Main Office and then the school lock will be removed from their assigned locker.

Students wishing to use a locker will request a locker through the main office and stay in that locker throughout the school year.

School locks will be put on a locker at any time the student lock is missing. Locks must stay on the lockers. Students will be assessed a \$10 fee if staff have to cut the student locker and/or if they have to clean a locker at the end of the school year.

Canine Assisted Searches

Trained canines accompanied by a trained handler may be used to assist the administration in a general search of the school or school grounds for the purpose of discovering illegal drugs or paraphernalia. No specific searches of students will be conducted by these means. General searches may take place in common areas as well as classrooms. Students will exit the classroom prior to any canine assisted search.

Automobile Searches

Students are permitted to park on school premises as a matter of privilege, not a right. The interior of any automobile brought on school property by a student may be searched and items seized by a school building principal or designee if there is reasonable suspicion to believe that illegal, unauthorized or contraband items are contained inside.

Passive Alcohol Screening

If there is reasonable suspicion to believe a student has been using alcohol during the school day a passive alcohol screening will be administered.

Video Monitoring

Video monitoring will be used to assist in ensuring that behavior on school property is consistent with the established safety and conduct rules, policies and procedures. If unacceptable behavior is observed and/or reported, timely and appropriate corrective action will occur.

The video monitoring of school buildings and grounds will not include audio recordings unless specific notice is given as required by law.

[See: Board Policy 3097 – Use of Video Monitoring Cameras.](#)

Suspension / Expulsion

Expulsion Procedure

Expulsion is any removal of a student for more than twenty (20) school days without the provision of educational services. Only the Board may expel a student from school.

After the administration has investigated the alleged misconduct, and made the decision to recommend an expulsion of the student to the Board, a Board Meeting shall be scheduled and the administration shall send a written notice to the student and the parent outlining the following:

- the intent to recommend an expulsion;
- the specific charges against the student;
- what rule or regulation was broken;
- the nature of the evidence supporting the charges;
- the date, time and place where the Board Meeting will be held;
- a copy of the procedure that will be followed by the Board;
- a reminder of the rights the student and parents have, including the right to counsel, the right to cross examine witnesses, and the right to present witnesses.

The meeting may be rescheduled by the parent by submitting a request showing good cause to the Superintendent at least 3 school days prior to the scheduled date of the meeting. The Superintendent shall determine if the request shows good cause.

Students with rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act may be expelled under certain circumstances, and the District must follow all procedural requirements of those Acts, including holding a manifestation determination meeting, prior to moving forward with an expulsion.

[See: Board Policy 3055 – Student Due Process Rights.](#)

Forms of Suspension

In-school suspension

Shall mean the student remains in school at a restricted, designated location for a designated period of time. The student shall be required to contact all of his/her teachers for schoolwork assignments. Credit will be given for the day(s) served if the assignments are completed. During in-school suspension, a student shall:

1. complete work assigned by school authority;
2. refrain from use of food products;
3. refrain from talking, visiting or sleeping;
4. secure permission before leaving an assigned seat;

Any infraction of rules of in-school suspension may result in out-of-school suspension.

Out-of-School Suspension

Before an out-of-school suspension, the student shall be provided oral or written notice of the charges. If the student denies the charges, the student shall be given an explanation of the evidence and an

opportunity to present his or her version. Prior notice and a hearing is not required and the student can be immediately suspended out-of-school when the student's presence poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disruption to the educational process. In such cases, the necessary notice and hearing shall follow as soon as practicable.

Any out-of-school suspension shall be reported as soon as possible to the student's parents. A written notice of the out-of-suspension shall contain a statement of the reasons for the out-of-school suspension and a notice to the parents of their right to review the out-of-school suspension. Upon request of the parents, the Superintendent shall convene a meeting to review the out-of-school suspension. At the meeting, the student's parents may appear and discuss the out-of-school suspension with the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall decide whether the out-of-school suspension is appropriate. The decision of the Superintendent is final and may not be appealed to the Board.

The term of an out-of-school suspension may vary depending upon the circumstances. A student may be suspended out-of-school for an initial term not to exceed ten (10) school days. Upon a finding by an administrator, after an informal hearing with the student, that the immediate return to school would be detrimental to the health, welfare or safety of others, or would be disruptive of the educational process, a student may be suspended out-of-school for an additional term not to exceed ten (10) school days.

Students with rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act may be suspended in the same manner as students without those rights, although the District must follow all procedural requirements of those Acts when suspending students with disabilities out-of-school.

Suspension and Expulsion as it Relates to District Provided Transportation Services

Suspension or expulsion from school may also result in suspension from district sponsored transportation services.

It is important to note that students may also be suspended or expelled from riding any district sponsored transportation services for conduct violations occurring on district school buses even if they are still being allowed to attend school.

Student Codes of Conduct

Minimum corrective action

Shall mean the school authority must administer at least the specified corrective action provided for each code violation.

Maximum corrective action

Shall mean the school authority may not exceed the degree of disciplinary action provided for the specific code violation. School authority may administer such corrective disciplinary action between the minimum and maximum after consideration of mitigating and aggravating circumstances provided. The degree of the severity (from the least to the most severe) of corrective disciplinary action is described as follows:

- Warning
- Teacher-Student conference
- Detention
- School Community-Service or Monetary fine

- Administrator-teacher-parent-student conference
- Reassignment
- In-school suspension (including loss of privilege to participate in extra-curricular and co-curricular activities)
- Out-of-school suspension (including loss of privilege to participate in extra-curricular and co-curricular activities)
- Reimbursement Restitution
- Police notification/criminal process referral
- Expulsion

Student violations of local, state, and/or federal law are referred to law enforcement.

1.0 School Process

A student shall not:

- 1.1 Engage in Disruptive Behavior** - Behavior displayed verbally or through action toward a school official or policy of the school so the normal routine of the classroom or activity is significantly disrupted. This includes both verbal and physical hazing, conduct on school premises, going to and from school, while riding on any school transportation, or attending or participating in any school sponsored activity while within the jurisdiction, supervision and control of the school.
- 1.2 Be Insubordinate to school authority**- The failure to obey a request by a district employee or representative.
- 1.3 Initiate or participate in sexual harassment or harassment.** This could include inappropriate displays of public affection.
- 1.4 Cheat or act in the conduct of cheating**- Cheat or cheating means a student acting dishonestly in carrying out any assignments. This may include, but is not limited to, copying assignments, utilizing AI (artificial intelligence such as Chatgpt, Claude, or Gemini), using unauthorized crib sheets for tests, looking at someone else's test, plagiarizing, copying other's work from the Internet or building servers or permitting another person to perform the assignment.
- 1.5 Plagiarize or submit the work of others or AI and claiming it as their own.** Plagiarism is defined as any of the following; directly copying a paper or portion of a paper without proper attribution; taking the ideas of another person or AI without proper attribution; turning in someone else's work as your own; or citing works that the student did not consult in the writing of the paper. Changing the wording of another document does not avoid the problem of plagiarism. Plagiarism is as much about the theft of ideas as it is words.
- 1.6 Use skateboards, roller blades, rolling shoes or similar devices in school without prior authorization from a school authority.**
- 1.7 Students are required to go directly to the office when directed to do so by any school personnel at the school site or at any school-sponsored activity.** Failure to do so will be considered a major offense of insubordination.
- 1.8 Students are required to stop and identify themselves when asked by any school personnel or designee or any contractor acting on behalf of the district at any school site or at any school-sponsored activity.** Failure to do so will be considered a major offense of insubordination.

Corrective Disciplinary Action

Minimum Corrective Action: Teacher-student conference and/or loss of credit for assignment, if appropriate.

Maximum Corrective Action: Suspension, Expulsion and/or Police Notification.

2.0 Person and Property

A student shall not:

- 2.1** Fight or Engage in Physical Endangerment-Physical actions between two or more individuals that may result in injury or any action that threatens or violates the safety of others.
- 2.2** Promote, Broker, Encourage, Instigate or Arrange a Physical Fight between two or more individuals that may result in injury or any action that threatens or violates the safety of others.
- 2.3** Vandalize Property-willfully or knowingly damage, tamper or destroy property owned or under the responsibility of the school, or property of an individual on school premises.
- 2.4** Drive or Ride in an Unsafe Manner-A student shall not operate a motor vehicle in an unsafe or careless manner on or around school property, use excessive speed, drive in reckless manner or fail to heed signs. From school, while riding on any school transportation, or attending or participating in any school sponsored activity while within the jurisdiction, supervision and control of the school.
- 2.5** Improperly Park - a student shall not improperly park a motor vehicle or bicycle. Continued violations of this infraction may result in towing the violator's vehicle or lose campus parking lot privileges.
- 2.6** Initiate or participate in sexual harassment.
- 2.7** Haze or Threaten to Haze—any student or person associated with any school in the Helena School District #1. Our schools are built on a foundation of school safety and respect. Any offense of this nature will be considered a major discipline infraction and will not be tolerated.
- 2.8** Misuse of School Computers and/or Equipment—Students are expected to be respectful of school property in all forms. To use school computers or other technology equipment, a student and his/her parents must abide by all conditions set forth by the "Technology Use Agreement" in this section of the handbook.

Corrective Disciplinary Action

Minimum Corrective Action: Teacher-student-parent conference.

Maximum Corrective Action: Expulsion and/or police notification/towing of vehicle.

3.0 Public Safety and School

Safety A student shall not:

- 3.1** Possess and/or use weapons or dangerous instruments, including but not limited to firearms, knives of any length, clubs, explosives (including fireworks), chains, or any instrument which may inflict bodily injury on another.
- 3.2** Falsely activate a fire alarm.
- 3.3** Participate in any type of threats that substantially disrupts/threatens the education process.
- 3.4** Commit arson, robbery or burglary.

3.5 Commit a felony or misdemeanor within school premises or during school-sponsored activities.

3.6 Possess or use a weapon within the District or at any school-related activity or events. The Board of Trustees determines that possession and/or use of a weapon by any person within the property of the district or at school-related activities, is detrimental to the welfare and safety of the students and school personnel.

Except as provided in 45-8-361, MCA possession and/or use of any dangerous or deadly weapon is any school building, in any school vehicle, on school property, or at any school-sponsored activity is prohibited.

The District will refer to law enforcement any person who possesses, carries, or stores a weapon in a school building, except as described in Board Policy. For the purposes of this section only, "school building" means all buildings owned or leased by the District; "weapon" means any type of firearm, any knife regardless of blade length, a sword, a straight razor, a throwing star, nunchucks, brass or other metal knuckles or any substance or any object used to threaten to be used as a dangerous or deadly weapon.

The Board is obligated to expel any student who uses, possesses, controls, or transfers a firearm or any object that can reasonably be considered or looks like a firearm, for a definite period of time of at least one (1) calendar year, except that the Board may permit the Superintendent to modify the disciplinary action. The Board hereby authorizes the Superintendent to modify the disciplinary action on a case-by-case basis.

3.7 Engage in any act or furtherance of any gang or gang activity. A "gang" is any group of two or more persons, whether formal or informal, who associate together to advocate, conspire, or commit;

- a) one or more criminal acts,
- b) acts which threaten the safety or well-being of property or persons including, but not limited to, harassment or intimidation, or
- c) acts which in any way disrupt the school environment. All acts will be reported to police officials.

3.8 Students are prohibited from wearing spikes, studs or chains to school or any other ornament that could cause personal harm to the student or another student.

Corrective Disciplinary Action

Minimum Corrective Action: Teacher-student conference/suspension/police notification. If a student possesses a dangerous or deadly weapon, the Board is obligated to expel the student for a definite period of time of at least one (1) calendar year, except that the Board may permit the Superintendent to modify the disciplinary action.

Maximum Corrective Action: Expulsion and/or police notification.

4.0 High School Attendance

The philosophy of Helena School District #1 is that regular attendance is essential for all students, and that schools will work cooperatively with students and parents toward that end. Regular and punctual attendance is important in the development of an effective learning environment, as well as ensuring student success in the classroom. Good attendance habits are also necessary in the development of sound character traits and for success in the work world.

Helena School District #1's attendance policies are developed in accordance with Montana State attendance laws. The building administrators will establish procedures to execute the Helena School District #1 attendance policy and will inform students and parents/guardians of these procedures. Attendance is the responsibility of both the student and the parent/guardian. The building administration will make the determination in all cases involving implementation and interpretation of the policy.

Parents/guardians are required to telephone the school and report every absence to the school. Regular school attendance is essential for the student to make the most of his or her education – to benefit from teacher-led activities, to build each day's learning on that of the previous day, and to grow as an individual. The District permits resident students of school age who are enrolled in a nonpublic or home school to enroll part-time (minimum of 2 classes) in a District school at the parent's request.

4.1 Procedure for an absence

Student Responsibility

- Students are responsible for attending class.
- Students are responsible for continually checking to make sure their attendance record is accurate in PowerSchool.
- Students are responsible for being in class and ready to start the lesson when the final bell rings.
- Students are responsible for developing time management skills, a productive work ethic and accountability for successful preparation for graduation and beyond.
- Students are responsible for staying in class for the duration of the period, not leaving early or taking excessively long breaks.
- Students are required to sign out at the attendance office before leaving school for an appointment or the remainder of the day.

Parent/Guardian Responsibility

- Parents/guardians must call (406) 324-2211 or email hhsattendance@helenaschools.org to report an absence for a student.
- Parents/guardians must call (406) 324-2211 or email hhsattendance@helenaschools.org to excuse their student for an appointment.
- Parents/guardians should make every attempt to schedule family vacations during school breaks.
- Parents/guardians can only excuse their own son/daughter.

School Responsibility

- Before absences become excessive, teachers and administrators or their designee, are encouraged to make student and parent/guardian contact to express concern and discuss ways in which to help the student attend school.
- Automated calls will go home twice a day if a student is marked unexcused.
- If absences become excessive (after 5 in any given class period), administration will work with the student and their family to discuss the issue and have the potential to assign an intervention (mentoring, academic support, intervention time, disciplinary actions if necessary, etc.).
- If student attendance does not improve, further attendance plans and agreements will be put in place to help ensure student success.

Excused Absences (EXC):

- Family authorized excused absences:
 - o Personal illness
 - o Family emergency or death in the family
 - o Medical or dental treatment
 - o Other activities as approved by the school
 - o Parent excuse from instruction/assemblies/events that offend the parent's beliefs or practices

Unexcused Absences (UNV, UNX):

- Leaving school premises without authorization from the nurse, the attendance office or principal or their designee
- Failing to attend class (while remaining on the premises) without advanced permission
- Family trips/vacations for which no prior arrangement have been made with the school
- Other absences not authorized by the school or parent/guardian

Absences that do not count against the 10-day limit:

- School-related absences (SCH, ACT) - When a student is absent due to a school-sponsored or school-approved event.
- School authorized excused absences
 - o Approved field trips
 - o Interscholastic competitions and events
 - o College visits (a maximum of 3 visits per student will be a school authorized excused absence)
 - o Other activities as approved by the school
- In-School Suspension (ISS) - Disciplinary action that results in a student being removed from a class or classes for a specified amount of time.
- Out-of-school Suspension (OSS) - Disciplinary action that results in a student being removed from the school setting for a specified amount of time. Students are able and encouraged to make-up work during this absence.
- Medical (MEX) - An absence that is medically cleared through a doctor, with documentation provided by the doctor, and administration. Students can use the MEX absence after their 10 days have been met.
- School authorized excused absences
 - o Approved field trips
 - o Interscholastic competitions and events

- o College visits (a maximum of 3 visits per student will be a school authorized excused absence)
- o Other activities as approved by the school

The entire attendance process is designed to collaborate with families regarding regular attendance. Our goal is to ensure that students are completing makeup work in a timely manner. Both “excused absences” and “unexcused absences” are treated the same way when addressing work makeup and completion. Progressive discipline will follow for repeated truancy. Attendance letters/communication is sent home after 5, 7, and 10 days of absence. Students are expected to keep up with their academics through communication with individual teachers. For make-up work, students will need to pay attention to the stated guidelines of having 2 days to turn in make-up work for the first day of an absence, with one additional day for each additional day absent. For example, if a student is absent 4 days, they would have 2 days for the first day, then 1 day for each additional day, making that 5 days to turn in make-up work.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to stay up to date with their child’s grades and attendance by checking PowerSchool regularly.

Tardy Policy

The expectation is that students will be in class, ready to learn, when the last bell rings. A progressive discipline policy will be applied to students are tardy on a regular basis. This will include communication from the teacher with the student and their family and potential conversations with administration. The following progressive discipline will be applied per class period for students:

- Tardies 1-3: Warning by the teacher to the student, tardy marked in PowerSchool
- Tardies 4-5: Lunch detentions assigned by the teacher, tardies marked in PowerSchool, parent notification home by the teacher
- Subsequent tardies: Discipline referral submitted to administration, discipline applied by the administrator that may include, but is not limited to ISS, detentions, removal from the class. Parent notification by the administration.
- If a student chooses not to serve detentions assigned by the teacher for tardiness, this will be considered insubordination and handled as such.

Tardies will not reset at the semester in a year-long class.

18-Year-Old Students

All policies and procedures apply to 18-year-old students except in the case where the 18-year-old is not living at home. When the 18-year-old student is not living at home under the general supervision of their parent/legal guardian, special arrangements must be made with the building administration for the student to excuse themselves.

Tardy Procedures

Tardiness: The following procedure is intended to be utilized for all tardy infractions, by all teaching staff, to provide a consistent approach to tardies at Helena High School. Teachers are required to maintain documentation of student tardies in their classroom and in the student management system. Students will be notified of each tardy he/she receives at the time of the violation on a per semester basis. Tardies are accumulated for a semester. A new count of tardies begins with each semester.

A student will be considered **tardy** if he/she is **not in the classroom** when the **tardy bell rings**. All tardiness is considered unexcused unless the student has a previously identified disability which prevents the student from being on time. Students with a disability requiring additional time shall notify the building principal. The building principal shall review the disability on a case-by-case basis and determine whether additional time is necessary.

- First through third tardy: Student notification and teacher documentation of tardy in student management system.
- Fourth and fifth tardy: Student notification, parent notification and teacher documentation of tardy in student management system, thirty minutes *detention with teacher or approved designee.
- If the student chooses not to attend the *30 minute detention assigned by the teacher, a discipline referral will be filled out, with tardy documentation, and submitted to the administration. The student must attend a conference with an administrator, parents will be notified, and the time of the missed detention will be doubled. If the student chooses not to attend this *detention, the student's parent will be called and she/he will receive one day of ISS.
- Sixth and beyond: Student notification and teacher documentation of tardy in the student management system, discipline referral submitted, parent notified, one day ISS or withdraw from class when appropriate.

*Detention will be rescheduled, without penalty, if the student was absent from school on the day detention was assigned.

Ways to Avoid Being Tardy:

- a. Get to school on time in the morning and after lunch.
- b. Avoid locker stops between classes by taking books and supplies for several classes.
- c. Organize your time and know the best route to your classes. Avoid high congestion areas in the halls.
- d. If an emergency arises, communicate the problem to your teacher as soon as possible.
- e. Make sure you have all supplies (textbooks, notebooks, pencils, pens, paper, assignments, etc.) and take them to class with you.

4.3 Leaving School during the Day

All students are required to sign out (before they leave school grounds) at the attendance office if it is necessary for them to leave school during the regular school day. Calls to excuse this absence must be received before the student leaves school grounds. Failure to do so will result in an unexcused absence. Teachers shall send students to the attendance office before allowing them to leave the building. Any student who finds it necessary to check out of school during the regular day **MUST** have the absence excused by their parent/guardian stating the date, destination and time the student is to check out of school. A slip will be issued to the student prior to departure but students must still sign out at the attendance office. If the student does not receive the slip, he/she should check with the attendance office before leaving.

Parents are not allowed to check a student out of a class to go to the library.

5.0 Student Regulations Concerning Use/Possession of Tobacco & Tobacco Innovation Products

The Board of Trustees of the Helena Public Schools is committed to providing a clean, healthy and safe school environment for students, employees and the general public. Use of tobacco in any form is considered detrimental to the health of non-users as well as users of tobacco. The use of tobacco or tobacco innovations is inconsistent with the Helena Public Schools health education programs.

The Helena Public Schools are "tobacco free." The use of tobacco or tobacco innovations including vaping will be prohibited from all school buildings and school sponsored events. [Board Policy 3150 - Tobacco Free Schools](#)

Students shall not use or possess any tobacco or tobacco-like products while on school property, while going or coming to school, during the lunch period whether on or off the campus and during or when coming to or from a school sponsored activity. Montana law further prohibits the use or possession of tobacco products by any person under the age of 18. (45-5-637, MCA).

Corrective Disciplinary Action

First Violation – Students will receive one (1) day of in-school suspension. Students will participate in tobacco education sessions and will provide documentation of completion. Students may request referral information about such courses from the school administration

Second & Subsequent Violations – Up to three (3) days ISS (In School Suspension) As set forth above including out-of-school suspension, school officials may administer the level of disciplinary consequences deemed appropriate in light of any mitigating and/or aggravating circumstances, and may pursue a recommendation for extended suspension in connection with a first offense or any subsequent offense. Under any and all circumstances, the administration retains the option of recommending to the Superintendent the removal of the student from the school setting.

6.0 Student Health Regulations on Alcohol/Drug Use, Abuse and Dependency

Student violations of local, state and/or federal law are referred to law enforcement.

6.1 In School during the School Day, Out of School during a School Activity, On School Property or Traveling to or from School

Helena School District No. 1 is committed to providing and maintaining a safe, healthy and productive learning environment for all students. The Board recognizes that unlawful alcohol or other drug possession and use can create serious health problems for students and that unlawful alcohol or other drug possession and use can create safety issues for all students.

When school personnel become aware of situations involving student use or possession of unlawful alcohol or other drugs, a reasonable effort will be made by school administrators to intervene with the appropriate parties. Further, recognizing that alcohol or other drug dependency is a treatable illness; the Board encourages and supports collaborative efforts among appropriate agencies, community

groups, the School District and families that assist in preventing student chemical use and abuse by providing procedures for education and intervention.

Jurisdiction: Rules and implementation for Helena School District #1 Student Health Policy on Alcohol/Drug Use, Abuse and Dependency applies to all students:

- 1) While on school property
- 2) When going or coming to school
- 3) During the lunch period whether on or off the campus
- 4) During or when coming to or going from a school sponsored activity.

Student Behavior: Student behavior is always expected to be appropriate.

Guidelines of student behavior concerning the Alcohol/Drug Policy include the following expectations. A student shall not:

- 1) Sell or distribute alcohol, unlawful drugs, controlled substances, hallucinogens or inhalants;
- 2) Use, possess or be under the influence of alcohol, unlawful drugs, controlled substances, hallucinogens or inhalants;
- 3) Use illicit drugs or medication without the formal supervision of a physician or in a manner other than prescribed by a physician.

Definitions: Unlawful drugs and controlled substances are those defined as illegal under the laws of the United States, the state of Montana and/or the city of Helena Ordinances. Illegal activities will be reported to the police and/or applicable authority when any of the above activities occur on school property, while in attendance at school or school activities, while coming to or going from school or a school activity, or during the lunch period whether on or off campus. Helena School District #1 response to these infractions may be independent of or in conjunction with police action, and will result in disciplinary consequences as outlined more fully below.

Corrective Disciplinary Action

First Violation:

- 1) Ten-day out-of-school suspension (unexcused) **OR**
- 2) Three-day out-of-school suspension (unexcused) upon completion of an alcohol or drug cessation program.

Failure to comply with these criteria will result in the exercising of the balance of Option 1.

- 3) The choice of either Option 1 or 2 will constitute one single incident of unexcused absence for attendance purposes.
- 4) Unserved suspension occurring at the end of the school year will be served the following school year commencing on the sixth day of school. This applies to all returning students.

Note: Fees associated with any alcohol or drug cessation programs sessions are the responsibility of the student's parent / guardian.

Second and Subsequent Violations:

- 1) Second and subsequent violations by the same student may result in any one or a combination of the following:
 - a. Minimum ten-day out-of-school suspension (unexcused) **OR**

- b. Five day out-of-school suspension (unexcused) if the student completes a chemical dependency assessment with a certified chemical dependency counselor at parent expense and follows all recommendations of the assessment.
- c. For purposes of Option (B) above, the student must provide both (1) written confirmation of the appointment for the chemical dependency assessment prior to re-entering school and (2) written authorization for HPS to provide information to and receive information from the dependency counselor prior to the student re-entering school.

Minimum Corrective Action: Confiscation of contraband, notification of parents and law enforcement and suspension.

Maximum Corrective Action: Confiscation of contraband, notification of parents and law enforcement and recommendation for expulsion.

As set forth above, school officials may administer the level of disciplinary consequences deemed appropriate in light of any mitigating and/or aggravating circumstances, and may pursue a recommendation for expulsion in connection with a first offense or any subsequent offense. Under any and all circumstances, the administration retains the option of recommending to the Superintendent the removal of the student from the school setting.

Violations of this rule will be cumulative during attendance at Helena schools from grades 9-12. A breathalyzer may be used at the discretion of a building administrator when it is necessary to ascertain whether a student has violated this rule with respect to alcohol use.

6.2.1 Extra / Co-Curricular Activities Procedure Regarding Alcohol, Tobacco, Tobacco Innovations, Vaping Products, and Other Drug Use/Possession & General Code of Conduct

Helena School District No. 1 Administrative Regulations Regarding Alcohol, Tobacco, Tobacco Innovations and Other Drug Use by Students in Extra/Co- Curricular Activities Students participating in school sponsored activities assume a responsibility to fellow students, the district, and the community to be law-abiding citizens.

Helena School District No. 1 recognizes the use of alcohol, tobacco, other drugs and drug paraphernalia as a significant health problem for many adolescents, resulting in negative effects on behavior, learning and the total development of each individual. Coaches and advisors of activities have a unique opportunity to observe, confront and assist young people. Helena School District No. 1 will make available at parent's expense education and awareness training in chemical and tobacco use issues for students who are in violation of its chemical and tobacco use regulations. The importance of the parent/guardian as the primary role model in the education and guidance of their children concerning alcohol, tobacco and other drugs is recognized and emphasized by Helena School District personnel.

In addition, schools are an integral part of the community and must confirm and support existing state and local laws which prohibit the use of alcohol, tobacco, other drugs and drug paraphernalia by youth. Federal law requires schools to have consistent alcohol, tobacco and other drug policies that give a strong no-use message to all youth.

Students who participate in extra/co-curricular activities must be willing to make the commitment to adhere to the regulations that govern these activities.

Therefore, middle school and high school students who participate in District extra/co-curricular activities are subject to all District no-use regulations, conditions and consequences.

Regulations - During the school year and the season of practice, play or rehearsal a student shall not:

- (1) Use, possess, buy, sell, or distribute alcohol, tobacco, tobacco innovations, vaping products, unlawful drugs, controlled substances, hallucinogens, inhalants or drug paraphernalia. (It is not a violation for a student to be in possession of a legally defined drug specifically prescribed for the student's own use by his/her doctor that is being used in the prescribed manner).
- (2) Students participating in school sponsored activities assume a responsibility to fellow students, the district, and the community to be law-abiding citizens.

The administration shall place limits, up to and including restricting a student from participating in school sponsored activities or being awarded school honors, if a student is found by school officials to have violated Board Policy or committed an act prohibited by state or federal law.

An appeal process will be available to all students under the District's "Uniform Grievance Policy".

[See: Board Policy 1085 – Uniform Grievance Procedure.](#)

Duration - Except where otherwise stated, these regulations are in effect from the date of the first practice for fall activities, through the academic school year and include any school sponsored activity that extends beyond the academic school year. Violations will be cumulative from the first day of the activity involvement throughout the student's participation as a freshman, sophomore, junior and senior until graduation from Helena School District No.1. A student's suspension from an extracurricular activity may also adversely affect other areas upon return. Upon return from any suspension, the coach or sponsor will determine varsity letter, playing time, starting position, performance role; and offices held in groups.

All unserved suspensions occurring at the end of the school year will be served the following school year commencing on the first day of the MHSa fall season.

Disciplinary Procedures: Investigation and Appeal

Any determination that a violation of these regulations has occurred will be made only after a meeting is held with the student and he or she is presented with the information indicating that a violation has occurred. The student must be afforded the opportunity to provide information in response. If a determination is made following that meeting that a violation has occurred, the student will be notified of that determination and of the consequences of that determination. Any determination that results in consequences being administered as per these regulations will be provided to the affected student in writing. If a student disagrees with a determination made by the building administration under these regulations, the student may seek review of that decision by the District Activities Director, and may secure further review of the determination by the District Superintendent and Board of Trustees according to the procedure outlined in the Uniform Complaint Policy.

First Violation: The student will be:

- Required to register for and complete a district-approved education course at his/her parent's expense; and
- Temporarily suspended from competing or performing in extra/co-curricular activities for a period of thirty-four [34] calendar days. If a student self-reports a violation to the Activity Leader or designee, the temporary suspension period will be reduced to twenty (20) calendar days.
- Suspended from team practices for up to five (5) days following notification.

In either situation, the student must (1) provide appropriate proof of completion of the education component outlined above; (2) continue to attend and participate in activity practices during the temporary period of suspension; and (3) complete a team/activity service as determined by the administrator and activity leader. The student's return to full participation in the activity is conditioned on fulfilling all of the requirements set forth above.

Second Violation: The student will be:

- Required to register for and complete a district-approved chemical assessment program at his/her parent's expense; and
- Temporarily suspended from competing or performing in extra/co-curricular activities for a period of sixty [60] calendar days. If a student self-reports a violation to the Activity Leader or designee, the temporary suspension period will be reduced to fifty (50) calendar days.
- Suspended from team practices for up to five (5) days following notification.

In either situation, the student must (1) provide appropriate proof of completion of the assessment component outlined above; (2) continue to attend and participate in activity practices during the period of temporary suspension; and (3) complete a team/activity service as determined by the administrator and activity leader. The student's return to full participation in the activity is conditioned on fulfilling the requirements set forth above.

Third Violation: The student will be deemed ineligible for participation in activities for a period of one calendar year. The student may, however, submit a petition to the District Superintendent no sooner than ninety (90) days after the incident requesting that he or she to be allowed to re-enroll in activities. Such a request must be accompanied by (1) a post-incident chemical dependency evaluation conducted by a licensed chemical dependency counselor and (2) a demonstration that all recommendations made in the assessment are being or have been satisfactorily met. The District Superintendent has the discretion to grant or deny the request based on his/her consideration of the relevant circumstances. The Superintendent's decision may be appealed to the Board of Trustees as outlined in the Uniform Complaint Procedure.

Extra / Co-Curricular Activities – All Levels

Basketball, Softball, Soccer, Cross Country, Swimming, Tennis, Track, Football, Volleyball, Golf, Wrestling, +Student Government, +DECA, +VICA, +Plymouth Troubleshooters, +Skills USA, +Speech, +Annual, +Newspaper, +BPA, +*Band, +*Chorus, +*Orchestra, +*Drama, +Cheerleading, and +Drill Team.

+Because these are yearlong programs the suspension will coincide with the MHSA Fall, Winter Spring calendar.

**All performances outside of the school day are affected. For the purpose of these regulations a student who misses one or more grade-related music event or performance will have the opportunity to make up the portion of the grade which is related to the events or performances.*

Calendar days begin on the first day of fall practice and end the last day of school. The activity seasons are outlined below:

- Fall - Start of Golf practice to State Football Championship
- Winter -Start of Wrestling practice to State Basketball Championship
- Spring - Start of Spring Sports Practice to last day of school for students

Travel

Students are subject to the full direction and authority of the coach or advisor while involved in activity travel. All school regulations concerning student behavior are in effect during activity trips.

6.3. Alcohol and Substance Use Class and Process

The building administrator will refer all students who are in violation of 6.1 or 6.2 to the *Prime for Life* classes. The student will sign a consent form that allows the trainer of the *Prime for Life* course to inform the school of the student's completion of the course. The *Prime for Life* trainer is responsible for notifying school administrators that the required sessions have been completed.

Students will be found in non-compliance if:

- They fail to attend their scheduled sessions with the *Prime for Life* instructor.
- If they are late for any of their scheduled sessions.
- If all homework assignments, related to their *Prime for Life* Classes, are not turned in.
- At the discretion of the Prime for Life Instructor, if significant behavior issues occur.
- If they opt out to sign consent form allowing the trainer to inform the school of completion.

Referrals to the *Prime for Life* course can occur through the following sources, understanding that a student may be referred by more than one source. *Prime for Life* is a requirement for all students who violate 6.1 or 6.2 regardless of their agency requirements.

1. Building Administrator Referral– student is cited at school, at a school related activity or during the school day.
2. Parent Referral – Parent may contact school officials with information about their child. Following an investigation a referral may be made.
3. Self-Referral – Student may contact a school official and report their own violation of school policy or because they may be requesting assistance regarding their own use.

7.0 Personal Appearance

Personal Appearance

Students' dress and grooming must not disrupt the educational process, interfere with the maintenance of a positive teaching/learning climate, or compromise reasonable standards of health, safety, and decency. While matters of dress remain the primary responsibility of students, in consultation with their parents or legal guardians, students are reminded that their appearance significantly affects the way others respond to them.

Appropriate dress, grooming and personal hygiene are expected of students. Students are to maintain high standards of personal cleanliness and personal appearance. Students are to avoid styles of dress and grooming which distract attention from the orderly pursuit of knowledge, disrupt the educational process, or constitute a threat to the health or safety of the student or others.

1. Students shall not wear bandanas, scarves or sunglasses in school buildings before, during or after normal school hours without specific written authorization by the building Principal.
2. Students shall not wear clothing or jewelry, which advertises tobacco, alcohol, drugs, or other harmful substances.
3. Students are prohibited from wearing to school any jewelry or other ornament, such as spikes, studs or chains, or any other ornament that could cause personal harm to the student or to another student. Students are permitted to wear jewelry as long as it is not distractive or potentially dangerous.
4. Students shall not wear articles of clothing, which are adorned with sexually suggestive slogans, profanity, lewd pictures, vulgar or obscene displays, or that which may be offensive to another's religion, race or national origin.
5. Students are prohibited from wearing, possessing, using, distributing, displaying, or selling any clothing, jewelry, emblem, badge, symbol, sign or other items that evidences or reflects membership in affiliation with any gang.
6. Students shall wear shoes or sandals to school and class. Footwear that is determined to be unsanitary or hazardous in the building may not be worn. Footwear that converts into rolling shoes is considered hazardous.
7. Students shall wear appropriate clothing, which is not of a distractive nature. Overly revealing apparel including, but not limited to, bare midriffs, low and revealing necklines, mesh tops, low riding pants, shirts without sides, and dresses or tops which were intended, as undergarments shall not be worn in school.
8. Any hairstyle is permitted so long as is kept neat, clean and controlled. Facial hair is permitted if it is kept neat and clean.
9. Wearing articles of clothing that are adorned with weapons, alcohol, sexually suggestive slogans, profanity, lewd pictures, vulgar or obscene displays, or that which may be offensive to another's religion, race or national origin.
10. Students shall wear appropriate clothing that does not disrupt the learning environment of other students and staff. Overly revealing apparel shall not be worn to school. This includes, but is not limited to, short shorts, cropped tops revealing midriffs, mesh tops, spaghetti straps, straps less than 1-inch in width, shirts without sides, shirts with overly wide arm openings revealing skin or undergarments, pajamas, sagging pants or sweats that reveal undergarments such as boxer shorts, thongs, underwear, or bare skin, and dresses or tops which were intended as undergarments shall not be worn in school. Students who wear clothing that disrupts the learning environment at Helena High School may be sent home to change into appropriate school apparel.

Repeated violations of these rules concerning student dress and grooming may result in a student being subjected to disciplinary action.

Extra-curricular and Co-curricular Activities –Appearance

Directors of extra-curricular and co-curricular activities may establish additional standards of personal appearance, including dress and grooming requirements for such activities. Students participating in those extra-curricular and co-curricular activities shall abide by those standards.

Corrective Disciplinary Action

Minimum Corrective Action: Teacher / Student Conference Maximum Corrective Action: Suspension

8.0 Use of Telephones, Cell Phones, Smart Watches & other Electronic Communication Devices

The possession and use of cellular phones, smart watches, and other electronic communication devices on school grounds, at school-sponsored activities, or while otherwise under the supervision and control of District employees is a privilege.

Students are prohibited from operating a cell phone or other electronic device (or cameras embedded in such device) while in a locker room, bathroom, or any other location where the privacy rights of others may be violated. Students may not use cell phones, cameras, smart watches or other electronic communication devices during classes unless such use is under the direction of certified staff for educational purposes. **Texting, taking photos, or recording video inside or outside the school building during the school day is not allowed.**

Students may not wear earbuds, headphones or earpieces during the school day as they will impede the student's ability to hear instructions, announcements, or teacher requests.

Students must comply anytime a request is made by school personnel to stop using a cell phone, smart watch or other electronic communication device. Unauthorized possession or use of these devices is grounds for confiscation. Repeated unauthorized use will result in disciplinary action. Cell phones or other electronic communication devices may be confiscated but may not be searched without student or parent permission. If consent to search is denied, law enforcement will be contacted and they may seek a warrant allowing them to search the contents of the phone. If consent is given and potential criminal conduct is discovered law enforcement will be contacted.

An exception to this procedure may be granted by the school administrator for purposes relating to health and/or safety needs.

The school and/or District are not responsible for students lost or stolen cell phones, smart watches or other electronic communication devices.

Corrective Disciplinary Action

First Violation –The administrator or designee will confiscate the cell phones, smart watches or other electronic communication devices for the remainder of the day and parents may be notified.

Second Violation –The administrator will confiscate the phone, smart watch, or other electronic communication device to be returned to the parent at the end of the day. The administrator will contact the parent(s) with the student present and explain the violation and the subsequent or designee consequences for non-compliance. Depending on the nature of the unauthorized use, the student’s parents and/or law enforcement may be contacted and the student’s cell phone may be searched.

9.0 Technology Use

Helena School District #1

2025-2026 Student Technology Use Agreement for Students in Grades 6-12

Helena School District #1 uses voice, data, and video electronic communication systems, including but not limited to devices, networks, servers, and hosted services, that allow educational opportunities for students and staff to communicate, collaborate, learn, and publish information. These system resources must be used to support education and/or research, and all student use must adhere to the educational goals and objectives of the district. Communications using the district systems are not private. Systems support and maintenance may require review and inspection of network activity, to include but not limited to student files and email.

21st Century Learning Skills require that students collaborate, think critically, communicate, create and innovate. There are many technological tools that support the development of 21st century skills (e.g., blogs, wikis, social networking sites, etc.). The district supports the use of these tools to enhance and enrich the learning and teaching environment. These tools must be used in support of education and not interfere with other student use of the systems.

Internet Filtering Statement

To comply with the Children’s Internet Protection Act and to the extent practical, technology protection measures shall be used to block or filter as defined by law. Filtering is by no means meant to supersede the guidelines and requirements described in this document. Filtered access to some sites may still violate the Technology Use Agreement.

Appropriate Use of the Internet, Systems, and Technology Equipment

Students are responsible for appropriate behavior when using District technology systems. The lists below do not cover every possible situation. If you have any question about appropriate behavior, ask your teacher, librarian, or technology teacher.

I will

- limit my bandwidth use on shared networks.
- use district and school technology to advance my education.
- use extreme caution when giving out personal information on the Internet, such as full name, address, telephone numbers, etc.
- take care of the equipment and leave it in good condition for the next student.
- follow instructions related to technology of all school personnel.
- use chat, email, and online discussions appropriately. (Remember that chats are not private.)
- ask for help with or report equipment or software problems.
- respect classroom expectations for technology use.
- only print what is necessary or assigned.

- immediately report any inappropriate email, chat, websites, etc. to school personnel.
- sign out/log off when finished using a shared device.
- cite my digital sources correctly.
- follow local, state, and federal copyright laws.
- return all borrowed technology equipment promptly and in the same condition as I received it.
- follow these expectations at school and at home.

I will not

- share passwords.
- try to gain unauthorized or illegal access to district technology.
- access, distribute, download, or store any illegal, pornographic, abusive, obscene, or harassing materials on any District network or device.
- cyber-bully. Examples of cyber-bullying include but are not limited to sending threatening emails, posting derogatory or personal comments and/or photos or videos about or of someone on any online platform, sending harassing text messages, threatening, or intimidating someone, and/or spreading rumors about someone. (See Board Policy: 4.22 Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Prevention Policy)
- plagiarize others' work and present it as my own.
- access, delete, or change files created by other students, faculty, or staff without their permission.
- participate in any online for-profit activities.
- download and/or install software.
- unplug or change lab devices without permission.
- create or distribute malicious software.
- stream video for personal use while connected to district networks.
- connect personal devices to any network other than the guest wireless as outlined below.
- eat or drink while using any school computer.

Guest Wireless Access (HSD-Guest)

Helena Public Schools provides wireless network access to students, staff, and guests who wish to use their personal devices while in district owned facilities. The following will apply:

- All users must follow the Technology Use Agreement when using a personal device on HSD-Guest.
- HSD-Guest is a public network, and as such there should not be an expectation of privacy or secure communications and no guarantees of service.
- Users are responsible for maintaining up-to-date antivirus software, firewalls, etc. on their personal devices.
- Printing is not available on HSD-Guest. Only those district systems that are publicly accessible via the internet will be accessible using HSD-Guest.
- Helena Public Schools will not provide technical support for users' personal devices on HSD-Guest.

Consequences for Violating the Student Technology Use Agreement

Depending on the age of the student and the severity and frequency of the misuse or abuse, one or more of the following consequences will occur:

- The student will receive a warning that includes specific discussion of the infraction.
- The student will be referred to the principal/administrator for discussion of the infraction.

- The student's parent/guardian will be notified by phone, personal conference, or official discipline referral.
- For serious or repeated internet misuse/abuse, students may lose access to the internet. (The terms of this restriction will be determined by the administrator or school board policy.)
- For serious or repeated technology equipment misuse/abuse, students may lose access to district technology and may need to develop a plan for restitution. (The terms of this restriction will be determined by the administrator or school board policy.)
- In some cases, a referral to proper authorities for disciplinary and/or legal action may be required.

Note: Depending on the circumstances, students who have lost district system or internet privileges may not use personal devices in lieu of district devices.

Helena Public Schools Chromebook Use Agreement

In order to ensure our students have consistent access to digital learning opportunities, 9th grade through 12th grade students will be assigned a Chromebook that they will use at school and at home (devices for K-8th grade students will be kept at school in most cases). **The form below needs to be completed and returned yearly for each student in grades 9-12.** The pages that follow are for family information and do not need to be returned with the form.

Section 1: Opt-out of District Device

Parents may choose to provide their child with a device that meets district technology requirements (see page 2). By agreeing to provide a device, parents are agreeing to send the device with students to school for in-person instruction each day. Additionally, parents agree to ensure that the provided device has the necessary district software installed. (There is no charge for any of the required software.)

___ Initial here if you will provide your student's device. Continue to Section 3: Signatures.

Section 2: Optional Accidental Damage Waiver

Parents may pay \$15 per year to provide accidental damage protection for the district-provided device. In the event that the device is accidentally damaged or found to be defective, the district will provide a replacement device, subject to the limitations listed on page 3. If you opt out of this coverage, any damage to the device will be considered a fine and added to the student's fees, per the chart on page 4.

Payments can be made directly at <https://helenaschools.revtrak.net/>.

___ I accept the accidental damage waiver and will pay the \$15 fee.

___ I do not wish to elect coverage on my child's device. I understand that any costs associated with the repair or replacement of my child's device will be my sole responsibility.

Section 3: Parent and Student Signatures

By signing you are accepting responsibility for a device provided by the Helena Public Schools for use during the 2021-22 school year or, in the event that you are providing a device for this student to use, agreeing to the parameters listed above in Section 1. The student agrees to follow the district's Acceptable Use Policy and to follow the guidelines listed on pages 2-3 for the care and maintenance of their device.

Student Name

Student Signature

Date

Parent Name

Parent Signature

Date

Digital Learning Student Device Guide

The information in this document applies to all devices issued to students by the Helena Public Schools.

In order to run appropriate learning software, all devices must meet or exceed hardware requirements:

- Chromebook: 4GB RAM; 32GB SSD; 11 or 14” screen, camera, Chrome OS 81.0.4044.127
- Laptop: Core i3, 128GB SSD, 8GB RAM, 13” screen size, camera, Windows/macOS
- iPad: current iPad or iPad Pro, 32GB storage, 9.7” display, iPad OS 13

Additionally, devices must have the following free software installed at all times:

- Microsoft Office 365 (Outlook, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, OneNote) <http://helenaschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Student-Office-365-Installation-Guide.pdf>
- Microsoft Teams <https://teams.microsoft.com/uswe-01/downloads>
- Google Chrome (Web Browser) <https://www.google.com/chrome/>

All devices must be able to connect to wifi networks, including HSD networks (HSD-Guest).

Parents and students must sign and return the Chromebook Use Agreement (page 1) each fall.

Student devices and chargers will be collected following 8th grade and 12th grade. Any student who transfers out of HSD will be required to return their device and charger. If a device and/or charger are not returned, the parent/guardian will be held responsible for payment in full. If payment is not received, the parent/guardian will be turned over to a collection agency.

The protective shell of the Chromebook only provides basic protection from everyday use. It is not designed to prevent damage from drops or abusive handling. We recommend a protective case be used when transporting the device. Cases are included for all devices provided by the Helena Public Schools.

All students are required to take their device home each night throughout the school year for charging.

DEVICES MUST BE BROUGHT TO SCHOOL EACH DAY IN A FULLY CHARGED CONDITION. Chromebook batteries are designed to last throughout the day under average use. In the event that a device’s battery is fully discharged at school, the student will be responsible for completing work with paper and pencil and transferring this work to a digital format as necessary outside of the school day.

District Chromebooks can be identified in the following ways:

- Service tag and serial number
- Individual’s account username or device name

Under no circumstances are students to modify, remove, or destroy service tag labels. Parents/Students will be charged for full replacement cost of a device if the service tag is modified, removed, or destroyed.

Accidental Damage or Loss Protection Details

Helena Public Schools recommends the purchase of accidental damage protection prior to the deployment of the Chromebook to your student. Helena Public Schools will be the sole provider of this protection.

Under this accidental damage protection plan, the Chromebook is protected against accidental damage or loss due to an act of nature. The Helena Public Schools will require that a police report be submitted in cases of theft. Fraudulent reporting of theft will be turned over to the police for prosecution. A student making a false report will also be subject to disciplinary action as outlined by board policy.

This protection plan does not cover loss of the Chromebook and/or its accessories, cosmetic damage, or damage caused by intentional misuse and abuse. The Helena Public Schools will assess the Chromebook damage and repair or replace the device if the damage is determined to be accidental and within the protection guidelines.

The device should not be disassembled, nor should there be any attempt to repair it by anyone other than a school authorized vendor. The Helena Public Schools has the right to decide when a Chromebook should be repaired in house versus filing a claim with the manufacturer.

Students and parents will be charged for Chromebook damage that is a result of misuse or abusive handling. Parents will be billed for parts and labor. Parents/Students will be charged for full replacement cost of a device that has been damaged beyond repair due to intentional misuse or abuse.

Loaner Chromebooks may be issued to students when their Chromebooks are sent out for repair by the Technology Department. If repair is needed due to malicious damage, the school may refuse to provide a loaner Chromebook. The full replacement cost is \$349.

Estimated Parts Replacement Cost Table:

Part	Replacement Cost*	Accidental Damage	Intentional Damage
Display	\$100	Covered	Full Price
Keyboard Replacement	\$110	Covered	Full Price
Bottom Assembly	\$150	Covered	Full Price
Battery	\$60	Covered	Full Price
Bezel	\$80	Covered	Full Price
Trackpad	\$60	Covered	Full Price
AC Adaptor	\$25	Covered	Full Price

* Repair costs are estimates and can change.

Payment for the accident protection plan is due at the time this form is returned to the

school. If this form is returned without payment, your accident protection plan will not be active until payment is received. Coverage is Effective from the date of payment to August 31, 2025.

2025-2026 Device Use Agreement & School Policy Agreement

In this agreement, “Device” means iPad, Chromebook, or laptop and all of its components, software, apps, and charger.

TERMS: You will comply at all times with the Helena Public Schools Student Technology Use Agreement. Any failure to comply may terminate your rights of possession effective immediately, and the school may repossess the property. Devices are assigned to a single individual and are not to be shared.

TITLE: Legal title to the device is in the school district, and it shall remain in the school district. The student’s right of possession and use is limited to and conditioned upon full and complete compliance with this agreement and the mobile device guidelines.

LOSS OR DAMAGE: If the property is accidentally damaged or incurs loss due to an act of nature, Helena Public Schools will assess the device damage and repair or replace the device under the accidental damage or loss policy. If the property is stolen, a police report must be filed by the student or the parents/guardians of the student involved in the loss of property. Loss or theft of the property must be reported to the school by the next school day after the occurrence. Fraudulent reporting of theft will be turned over to the police for prosecution.

REPOSSESSION: Students not complying with all terms of this agreement, including the timely return of the property, will be declared to be in default, and authorities may be sent to your place of residence or other location of the device to take possession.

TERM OF AGREEMENT: Your right to use and possession of the property terminates upon student withdrawal from HSD.

APPROPRIATION: Your failure to timely return the property and the continued use of it for non-school purposes without the school’s consent will be considered unlawful appropriation of school property.

MICROSOFT OFFICE 365 AND OTHER EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS: The district provides access to Microsoft Office 365 for cloud-based storage. District issued emails are created for educational work and a collaborative online workspace. Students will have access to apps and web based programs on their device for educational purposes that have been authorized by the teacher and/or school. Parents agree to provide consent for the use of these programs that are provided limited student information such as Microsoft Office 365, district cloud storage and collaborative educational workspace. Helena Public Schools complies with Montana student data privacy regulations.

Guide to AI Citations for Teachers and Students

AI-generated information that is used as content in written work should be cited as if it were from a book, a website, a historical document, a published chart, etc.

Guidelines

1. Even when changing the wording of the information through paraphrasing and summarizing, if you are not presenting your original thoughts, the material should be cited.
2. You should always check information generated by AI for accuracy before using it in your written work.
3. In some cases, it is necessary to cite both the AI-generated information as well as the source from which that content was generated.
4. There are numerous citation formats that can be utilized depending on your school's or organization's preferences, such as APA, MLA, and Chicago, so what is presented in a citation will vary by the citation style being used. The examples below are for APA and MLA as they are the most frequently used citation formats in Helena Public Schools.

Use Scenario	Examples (APA and MLA formats)
AI is used to write content. Example: ChatGPT is used to generate a list of the 5 most popular vehicles sold in the US in 1965.	MLA *in-text citation: (5 most popular vehicles) *works cited entry: "What were the 5 most popular vehicles sold in the United States in 1965?" prompt, ChatGPT, OpenAI, 17 Feb 2025, chatgpt.com. APA *in-text citation: (OpenAI, 2025) *reference list entry: OpenAI. (2025). ChatGPT (Feb 17 version) [Large language model]. https://chatgpt.com
AI is used to make text from a source easier to read/understand. Example: ChatGPT is used to summarize Act 1, Scene 1 of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet for students struggling to understand it.	This requires citation of the original source and the AI source. MLA *in-text citation: (Shakespeare 2-12) *works cited entry: Shakespeare, William. "Act 1, Scene 1." Romeo and Juliet. Simon Schuster & Co, 1995, pp. 2-12. Summarized with AI assistance using ChatGPT. "Summarize Act 1, Scene 1 of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet" prompt. ChatGPT, OpenAI, 17 Feb 2025, chatgpt.com. APA Shakespeare, W. (1995). Act 1, Scene 1. Romeo and Juliet (pp. 2-12). Simon Schuster & Co. Summarized with AI assistance using ChatGPT. Reviewed by Tammy Teacher, Helena Public Schools.

Sources:

"AI @ MTD" Website <https://montanadigitalacademy.org/innovation/ai-at-mtda/>

"Generative AI Guidance for Teachers and Students," Great Falls Public Schools, Website https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1723835230/gfpsk12mtus/nxz7wvc4trkoq3s75fgl/08-16-2024_GFPS_GenerativeAIGuidanceforTeachersandStudents06-26-24.pdf

10.0 Bus Behavior Conduct Guidelines & Consequences

Each transported student has the right to a safe and enjoyable ride to and from school that is free from intimidation, threat or harassment. Good conduct of all transported students while waiting for the school bus and while traveling to and from school is primary for a safe and enjoyable ride for all students. Behavior/Conduct codes outlined in this handbook apply on all school district buses.

The district has a video that explains transportation safe riding practices that may be viewed on the Helena School District Transportation website or will be made available upon request.

The School District has established student behavior procedures that apply to all transported students while on the school bus and while in school bus loading or unloading areas. The bus and the bus stop are extensions of the school day. Each individual student, as well as his/her parents, or guardians, is responsible for the behavior of that student while on the school bus and in school bus loading or unloading areas.

Transportation service is a privilege that is granted by the district to eligible students and their parents or guardians that is contingent upon proper behavior according to established district policies, rules and standards. A student’s eligibility to ride the school bus may be suspended or revoked for a violation of school bus safety or conduct rules and standards, or for violation of any other law or policy governing student conduct on a school bus. Revocation of a student’s bus riding privileges is not considered an exclusion, expulsion or suspension from school, however unacceptable conduct on the school bus may result in suspension or expulsion from school. It shall be the responsibility of the parent or guardian to transport students to and from school when bus riding privileges are revoked. The district will not provide alternative transportation to a student whose transportation privileges have been suspended or revoked. (*Decisions regarding special education students will take into account related disabilities and individual education requirements pertaining to transportation).

Suspension or expulsion from school may also result in suspension from district sponsored transportation services.

It is important to note that students may also be suspended or expelled from riding any district sponsored transportation services for conduct violations occurring on school district busses even if they are still being allowed to attend school.

In addition to the student conduct codes & violations outlined in this handbook a student shall not:

- 10.1** Eat drink or litter on the bus.
- 10.2** Leave the seat or stand while the bus is in motion.
- 10.3** Use profanity, verbal abuse, harassment, obscene gestures or have possession of unacceptable material.
- 10.4** Provide false identification.
- 10.5** Ride an unassigned bus or use an unassigned bus stop.
- 10.6** Open windows past the safety line.

- 10.7 Attempt to ride a bus during a bus suspension.
- 10.8 Be disobedient or disrespectful to the driver.
- 10.9 Hang out the windows.
- 10.10 Throw any object.
- 10.11 Hold onto or attempting to hold onto any portion of the exterior of the bus.
- 10.12 Enter or leave the bus through emergency door/tampering with bus equipment unless authorized.
- 10.13 Be involved in any activity that distracts the driver from safely driving the bus.
- 10.14 Refuse to wear a seatbelt.

Corrective Disciplinary Action

Minimum Corrective Action: Driver identifies the unacceptable behavior and informs the student of the intent to complete a conduct report if the behavior continues.

Maximum Corrective Action: Unlimited transportation services suspension, school suspension, expulsion, and/or police notification.

**** Bus Severe Clause: Busing Behavior Severe Clause***

If a student performs an act that severely and immediately jeopardizes the safety of students, the district may suspend the student from riding the bus. The district will attempt to notify the parent(s) or guardian of this action by telephone as soon as possible after the route is completed. A written incident report will be prepared and sent to the parent(s) or guardian. Riding privileges will not be reinstated until after a conference is held with the Transportation Specialist, principal, student and parent(s) or guardian. Law Enforcement may be notified in the event that criminal activity has transpired or assistance is required by the driver or district. Behavior deemed severe may result in suspension or expulsion from school.

- When less than sixty (60) school days are left in the academic year, the remainder of the suspension shall be served in the next school year.

For questions regarding the class please contact the Helena Public Schools Transportation office at 324-2100.

11.0 Dance Regulations

- Regularly enrolled students at Helena High and their approved guests are welcome to attend the school-sponsored dances. Guests cannot include students who are currently attending or are middle school aged, students who have graduated from high school more than one year ago or have been out of school for more than one year. School administrators reserve the right to deny entry to any student not enrolled at Helena High School.
- Parents and patrons of the school may be admitted as visitors and are welcome at all times. Helena High Students attending a school-sponsored dance may be requested to show current student I.D.
- Doors will be closed one hour after the dance starts and no students will be admitted after that time unless prior arrangements have been made with the administration. No students may leave the dance after entering unless they do not plan to return. Dances generally start at 8:00 p.m. and end at 11:00 p.m. Dance times will be set by the administration.
- All school regulations apply at school-sponsored dances.

- Building administrators or their designees reserve the right to screen students and guests with a passive alcohol screening device prior to entering the dance. If the screening process indicates that a person has been using alcohol reasonable attempts will be made to contact his/her parent or guardian. The police will also be contacted.
- No students may leave the dance after entering unless they do not plan to return.
- Absolutely no slam dancing, moshing, grinding or other inappropriate dance behavior will be tolerated. Failure to comply will result in removal from the dance.
- There must be at least seven (7) HHS faculty members in attendance at all dances, unless previously negotiated with an assistant principal. Faculty chaperones must report at least 15 minutes before the dance begins and remain until all students depart at the end. A list of chaperones must be presented to an assistant principal no later than one week before the dance.
- The code of dress for dances requires that students must at all times be wearing suitable pants, shirts and foot apparel.

Helena High School Dance Expectations 2025-2026

The following expectations are for current HHS students and must be signed by the student and parent prior to buying a ticket.

****Guests and parents must also sign this form, be less than one year out of high school, and may not be in middle school.**

****Guests of HHS students must be "in good standing" with the Helena High School staff, faculty, and community.**

****Helena High School's Administration and/or Student Council reserve the right to revoke guest privilege and/or admittance.**

These expectations are defined to help ensure that everyone has a safe and fun-filled Dance. Remember, dances are a Helena High School sponsored event, and therefore, the same school rules and expectations apply at dances. The following are expectations that will be upheld this year:

- Please conduct yourself in a respectful manner.
- Dress code is school appropriate.
- Dance with respect for your partner and the other students and adults in attendance. This dance is sponsored by Helena High School. Simulating sexual acts or groping your partner while dancing is not acceptable behavior. This includes grinding, twerking or anything else. Face to Face with Space.
- Appropriate behavior is expected. Remember that the HHS Dances are an alcohol and drug free event. Breathalyzers used at the door. Any student found to be in possession or under the influence of alcohol or drugs will be turned over to the local police authorities. Students who violate the alcohol or drug policy are subject to suspension from school and loss of privilege to participate in graduation ceremonies and/or future dances.
- Admittance into the dance will not be allowed one hour after start time.
- The HHS student and his/her parents are responsible for the guest's behavior. If there is a problem with a guest, the HHS student will lose all privileges to bring a guest to any future HHS dances.
- All students and guests must leave dance location immediately at the conclusion of the function. The dance start and end times will be properly noticed prior to the dance happening.
- All guests who are of high school age must be enrolled in school and in good standing with that school. Guests who are former HHS students must have left in good standing. Former students from HHS who are attending another school must be in good standing at that school. Individuals who have dropped out or discontinued attending HHS and are not attending another school will not be admitted.
- HHS requires students to sign this contract before attending any dance.

I agree to dance in an appropriate manner as defined by HHS administration and faculty. Face to Face with Space.

Your initials and signature below indicate you understand the expectations and agree to abide by all school rules and district policies.

_____ I understand that dances are school-related events, all school rules apply. I agree to abide by the expectations set forth including dress code and respect for students and adults at the dance.

_____ I understand the consequences for any inappropriate behavior. I have read these rules and agree to abide by them.

As a parent/ guardian, by signing this form I understand that if my child is removed from the dance for any reason, it is my responsibility to pick up my child from the dance. In addition, I agree to the school rules and the expectations set forth and support the school dance policies.

HHS Student Name (Print): _____ HHS Student Signature: _____

Guest's Name: _____ Guest Signature: _____

Age and Grade of Guest: _____

Name of School guest is enrolled: _____ Guest School Administrator Signature: _____
(Administrators: by signing this you are verifying that the above named student is in good standing at your school)

HHS Parent/Guardian Signature Date

Guest Parent/Guardian Signature Date

HHS Parent/Guardian Home Phone

Guest Parent/Guardian Home Phone

HHS Parent/Guardian Cell Phone

Guest Parent/Guardian Cell Phone

Helena High School Student Curricular Group and Club Application

Circle One: 1. This application is for a new club. 2. This application is to renew an existing club.

This application is to request approval of a student club at Helena High School. The application must be fully completed for the application to be considered. Incomplete or incorrectly prepared applications will not be considered. All applications will be considered in accordance with and District guidelines. Copies of the guidelines are included in the Helena High School Student Handbook.

Approved clubs that violate District Policy, Montana law or federal law are subject to suspension or termination.

Step 1. General Club Information and Bylaws, Charter, or Statement of Purpose

Proposed Club Name: _____

Proposed Club Supervisor Name: _____

Faculty supervisors do not sponsor or participate in non-curricular clubs; however, an adult supervisor must be present.

Step 2. Club's bylaws, charter, or statement of purpose.

Please attach any documents outlining the rules and procedures under which the club will operate. These documents may include but are not limited to bylaws, membership expectations, or a national charter. If the documents are not yet available, drafts may be attached, or a detailed statement of purpose can be provided until documents are available. Describe how members are selected, if there is a membership fee, if fundraising is required and if meeting are for service hours.

Step 3. Basis for Curriculum Related Status (For consideration as a curricular club. Groups that do not satisfy this step may be permitted to operate as a non-curricular student group.)

To be approved as a curricular club, the club must be based upon an aspect of the school's curriculum or the functions of the club must enhance a course offered at the school. Please attach a description of why the proposed club should be designated as a curricular club providing specific facts supporting such status.

Step 4. Time, frequency, location, and notice of anticipated club meetings and functions

Please attach a statement of the proposed use of school facilities, including at the specific areas or facilities of the school for which use is requested and the proposed nature of the use of those facilities. Attach or describe any examples of materials which the club plans to use to tell students about the club's existence or to invite students to join.

Step 5. Submission and Acknowledgement

By signing this application form the students and advisor acknowledge that the club's members and operations will adhere to applicable Board policies and administrative procedures governing curricular clubs.

Requesting Student Date Proposed Supervisor Date

FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT USE ONLY

Application Received By: _____ Date: _____

Approved as Curricular Club By: _____ Date: _____

Operating as Non-Curricular Student Group By: _____ Date: _____

NOTES:

The administration will retain all records related to this application. The administration will report to the requesting students, advisor, and Superintendent when new curricular student clubs have been approved.

Authorization to Participate in Club or Activity

The District offers student clubs and extracurricular activities, events, and programs for students, including, but not limited to, curricular and co-curricular programs and clubs, sporting events, activities, band, etc. as identified in this handbook.

The passage of a law in the 2023 Legislative session requires that parents/guardians must provide written permission for a student to participate in a school club or activity. By signing this form, you give permission for your child to participate in the Club(s) and Activity(ies) identified by you and you agree to the following:

- Represent the student is fully capable of participating in the Club/Activity or Clubs/Activities and agree to disclose all known limitations to the District, including, but not limited to; medical conditions, physical limitations, and any other limitation known to the Student or the Parents.
- Understand and acknowledge that the student is subject to all eligibility requirements adopted by the District for participation;
- Understand and acknowledge that engaging in any Activity may require a degree of skill and knowledge which the student may not possess;
- Understand and acknowledge that the Club or Activity in which the student seeks to participate may require an audition or try-out to determine if the student has the required skills/abilities to participate and that the Student may be “cut” from the Club or Activity through the audition/try-out process;
- Understand and acknowledge that engaging in any Activity may require a participant to listen to any instructions, warnings, or risk assessments of the District, to ask for instruction or clarification whenever needed, and to follow instructions; and
- Understand and acknowledge that the District may remove the student from a club or activity for any breach of safety policies, or any conduct that the District deems unsafe.
- By signing this Agreement, the Student and Parents acknowledge they have carefully read and understand its contents and the parent/guardian agrees to allow the student to participate.

Club(s) and/or Activity(ies) for which permission is given for the student to participate are listed below:

STUDENT NAME / STUDENT SIGNATURE

DATE

NAME OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN PARENT OR GUARDIAN SIGNATURE

DATE

Please return form to: your school office prior to the first day of the activity or club meeting. Signed permission must be provided before a student can participate in a Club or Activity.

No Release of Information to Recruiters Form

Opt-Out Notification Form
Military &/or Other Recruiters 2025-2026 School Year

Must be returned by: November 21, 2025

I hereby request that Helena School District No.1 not release the name, address and telephone number of the student listed below to (check applicable):

- ☐ Military Recruiters, Military Schools or the Armed Forces
☐ All other recruiters to include education and/or employment recruiters

Name of student: _____

Date of Birth: _____

School attending: _____

Parent signature: _____

Date signed: _____

(Not required if student is 18 years of age)

Student signature: _____

Date signed: _____

(Required if student is 18 years of age or older)

For School Administration:

Date Received: _____ *Received by:* _____

Date Noted in Student Management System: _____

Legal Counsel has approved this form as to legal form and content. Date: 10.2005

**This form is available online in the Helena High School
Student / Parent Handbook**

Reference: 10 U.S.C. 503, as amended by Section 544, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2002 (P.L. 107-107), the legislation that provides funding for the Nation's armed forces.



Volunteer Form

Name: _____

All volunteers who have *unsupervised access* to District students on District property or at a District sanctioned event will be required to submit to a comprehensive criminal background check, which will include a fingerprint-based background check. Volunteers will not be able to serve until the District has received and approved the results of the criminal background check.

The District may, at its discretion, conduct a name based background check.

Volunteers have the responsibility to notify the District as soon as possible if they are arrested, charged with a crime, or served a restraining order. The District will take appropriate action if it is determined the activity impacts the ability to volunteer.

For additional information, please refer to Board Policy 5122 Criminal Background Investigation

Please answer:

Have you ever pleaded guilty to, or have you ever been convicted of any violation of criminal law, including criminal convictions resulting from a deferred sentence or a plea of nolo contendere/no contest (minor traffic offenses exempted)?

_____ Yes _____ No Answering 'yes' may not prevent approval. All circumstances will be considered.

If yes, describe in full (attach additional sheets if necessary) and contact the HR department at humanresources@helenaschools.org or call (406) 324.2010

I understand I will be acting as a volunteer with K-12 students and know of no reason why I should not act in this capacity. I agree to fulfill the volunteer responsibilities outlined in the HPS Volunteer Handbook.

I affirm the information I have provided is accurate.

Signature

Date

To be completed by School Personnel

School Contact will be: _____

Background Check For Unsupervised Access Required: ____yes (notify HR) ____ no

Date notified by HR background cleared _____

Background check valid for five (5) years

Helena School District #1

Helena High School Permission to Publish

I hereby grant permission to the Helena High School Web Master to publish my work entitled, on the Helena High School web site.

I understand that such publication will include formatting the work for the appropriate media and may include editorial revisions.

I further understand that once published other network users unknown to me will be able to access and obtain my work.

My work may only be published with (check one)

_____ My full name (as written below)

_____ First name and last initial

_____ Initials only

_____ Anonymous

I stipulate that the following statement is to be appended to my work:

Copyright 2009. Links to this site or quotations from this work must acknowledge (Student's name) as authorized creator and that the author reserves all rights to his/her work.

Signed _____ Parent/Guardian's Signature _____

Date _____

Directory Information Opt-Out Form

Helena Public Schools

Instructions:

Please complete this form if you do not want your student's directory information to be released. Directory information may include your student's and other information as noted below:

- A playbill, showing your student's role in a drama production;
- The annual yearbook;
- Honor roll or other recognition lists;
- Student directories;
- Graduation programs; and
- Sports activity sheets, such as for wrestling, showing weight and height of team members.

Acknowledgment:

I understand that by opting out, my directory information will not be shared or made public by [Name of Institution/Organization]. This opt-out request will remain in effect until I provide written consent to include my information in the directory or otherwise notify the Capital High School Office.

Provide the Following:

Student Name: _____

Student Grade: _____

Student Birthdate: _____

Parent Signature:

Print Parent Name:

Date:

Automated System Notifications Opt Out Form

Student Name: _____

Student's School: _____

Parent / Guardian Name: _____
(Please print)

Date: _____

I do not give the District and my child's school consent to send me automated outreach messages through the District's notification system.

I understand emergency messages are excluded from this opt out request.
Please copy this form, complete it, and return it to your child's school
if you do **NOT** wish to receive automated information messages.

Receipt of Handbook and Acknowledgement of Rights

I have received a copy of the Helena High School Student Handbook for 2025-2026 school year. I understand that the handbook contains information that my child and I may need during the school year. I understand that all students will be held accountable for their behavior and will be subject to the disciplinary consequences outlined in the handbook.

I further acknowledge that I have been provided the opportunity to opt out (or limited opt-out) of the release of directory information about my child. If I so choose, I will make that designation in writing to my child's principal by the **third Friday in November**.

Name of Student

Signature of Student

Signature of Parent

Date

Bengal Fight Song

Come on you brawny Bengals down that line/floor
And we will
Score a touchdown every time/really show them how to score
And we will cheer boys/girls cheer for HHS
For alma mater we will always do our best
And when we're through boys/girls score another score
And we will cheer you onward all the more

FOR WE ARE BRAWNY BENGALS

Red and white
Full of fight
On to victory!

HELENA BENGALS

Red and White
Full of fight
On to Victory!



**Be Responsible
Be Involved
Be Respectful
Be a Graduate!**



Go Bengals!