



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

## **Board of Trustees Teaching and Learning Committee Meeting**

Wednesday, October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025

12:00pm

Lincoln Center & TEAMS

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### **MINUTES**

#### **ATTENDANCE**

*Trustees: Others:*

Jenny Murnane Butcher, Trustee  
Siobhan Hathhorn, Trustee

Rex Weltz, Superintendent  
Candice Delvaux, Executive Assistant  
Josh McKay, Assistant Superintendent  
6-12  
Todd Verrill, Facilities Director  
Justine Alberts, Assistant  
Superintendent PreK-5  
Kaitlyn Hess, Assessment and Federal  
Programs Director  
Gary Myers, Director of Educational  
Technology  
Lona Carter, Student Health Services  
& Special Education Director  
Keri Mizell, Human Resources  
Director  
Jane Shawn, HEA President  
Ashlie Buresh, TOSA  
Taylor Lassiter, Communications  
Specialist  
Courtney McAdams, Guest of the  
Public  
Kay Satre, Attending as a Guest of the  
Public

#### **I. CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS**

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 p.m. by Trustee Siobhan Hathhorn.

## **II. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no general public comment.

## **III. REVIEW OF AGENDA**

No changes were requested to the agenda.

## **IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The committee reviewed and accepted the minutes from the 9.10.25 Teaching and Learning Committee Meeting.

## **V. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/DISCUSSION**

### **A. Instruction Before Construction**

Ms. Justine Alberts, Assistant Superintendent PreK-5, discussed Instruction Before Construction along with Superintendent Rex Weltz, and Assistant Superintendent 6-12 Josh McKay. The presentation focused on designing new and renovated school buildings to support 21st-century learning. They emphasized proactively aligning instructional practices with flexible, collaborative, and technology-rich learning environments, incorporating natural light, safety, and student-centered spaces. Discussion included learning from existing newer buildings to identify what works and what could be improved, conducting site visits to other schools, and creating innovative labs and hands-on learning spaces at the high school level. The presentation highlighted the importance of flexible design to accommodate evolving instructional needs and to ensure long-term value for students and staff. Assistant Superintendent Alberts, Assistant Superintendent McKay, and Superintendent Weltz addressed questions from the Teaching and Learning Committee regarding the information presented.

### **B. Action Plan**

The Teaching and Learning Committee was provided with an update on the district action plan following fall benchmarking. Most schools completed benchmarking, shared baseline reports with families, and used the data to develop action plans and set goals aligned to typical and stretch growth. Support from Ms. Ashlie Buresh and Title teams is helping educators identify targeted interventions in reading and math, including oral reading fluency labs, Tier 2 and 3 resources, and focused professional learning. Middle and high school teams are reviewing curriculum alignment, instructional strategies, and collaborative planning to ensure students meet growth targets. The discussion emphasized using data to identify students' needs, monitor instructional effectiveness, and build sustainable, school-specific strategies that support district-wide goals. Assistant Superintendent Alberts addressed questions from the Teaching and Learning Committee regarding the information presented.

**C. GT Third Party Review**

The District will be bringing on Dr. Jonathan Plucker to conduct a third-party review of the District's Gifted and Talented PEAK program, including focus groups, and one-on-one Interviews. The review will assess program structures, evaluation practices, and the effectiveness and relevance of services to ensure they meet student needs, aligning with goal #8 of the district's action plan. Assistant Superintendent Alberts addressed questions from the Teaching and Learning Committee regarding the information presented.

**D. In-District Boundary Change Review**

Assistant Superintendent McKay provided a presentation on the *In-District Boundary Change Review*. He emphasized the district's commitment to transparency and noted that the proposals, originally discussed in March and May, remain largely unchanged. The discussion highlighted that boundary adjustments primarily affect transportation, with flexible sibling and enrollment rules maintained to provide families choice. Assistant Superintendent McKay explained that the gradual implementation timeline allows for careful adjustment over several years, aligning with facility planning for new and remodeled schools, and ensuring balanced student populations across elementary, middle, and high schools. Assistant Superintendent McKay addressed questions from the committee regarding the *In-District Boundary Change Review*.

**VI. BOARD/SUPERINTENDENT COMMENTS**

There were no further board or superintendent comments.

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:57 p.m. by Trustee Siobhan Hathhorn.