



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

## Board of Trustees Policy Committee Meeting

Tuesday, December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025

12:00 p.m.

Lincoln Center

1325 Poplar St., Helena, MT 59601

And via

TEAMS

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### MINUTES

#### *Attendees*

##### *Committee:*

Jennifer Walsh, Committee Chair  
Linda Cleatus, Trustee  
Keith Meyer, Trustee

##### *Others:*

Josh McKay, Assistant Superintendent  
Rex Weltz, Superintendent  
Keri Mizell, Human Resources Director  
Jane Shawn, HEA President  
Bea Kaleva, District Legal Counsel  
Lona Carter, Student Health Services &  
Special Education Director  
Candice Delvaux, Executive Assistant  
Janelle Mickelson, Business Director  
Justine Alberts, Assistant Superintendent  
Taylor Lassiter, Communications Specialist  
Gary Myers, Director of Educational  
Technology

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 12:03 p.m. by Policy Committee Chair, Trustee Jennifer Walsh. Following the call-to-order, members of the Policy Committee and other attendees introduced themselves.

**II. REVIEW OF AGENDA**

No changes were requested to the agenda.

**III. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no general public comment.

**IV. REVIEW OF THE 10.7.2025 POLICY COMMITTEE MINUTES**

The Policy Committee reviewed and accepted the minutes from the October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Policy Committee meeting.

**V. POLICIES FOR SECOND READING-HAVE GONE TO FULL BOARD 1<sup>ST</sup> READING**

**A. Policy 2005: School Year, Calendar, and Day**

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 2005: School Year, Calendar and Day*. This policy has been presented to the full Board of Trustees for a first reading and has been updated to align with House Bill 591. Its purpose is to educate students about the sacrifices made for freedom during the founding of the United States and the core values on which the nation was established. The committee also noted that, although Martin Luther King Day is no longer recognized as a federal school holiday, the district may still choose to close schools on that day, and the policy can remain unchanged. The Policy Committee determined that *Policy 2005: School Year, Calendar and Day* would go before the full Board of Trustees for action.

**B. Policy 2016: Human Sexuality and Identity Instruction**

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 2016 Human Sexuality and Identity Instruction*. This policy has been presented to the full Board of Trustees for a first reading and has been updated to align with the revised definition of human sexuality and identity instruction outlined in House Bill 471. The policy also clarifies parents' or guardians' rights regarding consent, including the opt-out provision for human sexuality instruction, the opt-in provision for identity instruction, and the associated notice requirements. The Policy Committee determined that *Policy 2016 Human Sexuality and Identity Instruction* would go before the full Board of Trustees for action.

**C. Policy 2100: Recognition of Native American Cultural Heritage**

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 2100: Recognition of Native American Cultural Heritage*. This policy has been presented to the full Board of Trustees for a first reading. It emphasizes that schools located in close proximity to Montana Tribes will work in consultation with Tribal partners when providing instruction and implementing educational goals that include Native American cultural heritage. The Policy Committee determined that *Policy 2100: Recognition of Native American Cultural Heritage* would go before the full Board of Trustees for action.

**D. Policy 2140: Suicide Awareness and Prevention Training**

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 2140: Suicide Awareness and Prevention Training*. This policy has been presented to the full Board of Trustees for a first reading and has been updated to reflect employee training timeline requirements, as well as to clarify how training may be delivered in accordance with Senate Bill 369. The Policy Committee determined that *Policy 2140: Suicide Awareness and Prevention Training* would go before the full Board of Trustees for action.

**E. Policy 4332: Display of Flags and Banners on District Property**

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 4332: Display of Flags and Banners on District Property*. This policy has been before the full Board of Trustees for a first reading. This is a new policy created to align with House Bill 819 regarding the specific flags and banners that can be displayed on district or school property. This does not apply to personal clothing, jewelry or accessories worn by school employees except where uniform policies or official dress codes apply. The Policy Committee Determined that *Policy 4332: Display of Flags and Banners on District Property* would go before the full Board of Trustees for action.

**VI. POLICIES RETURNING TO COMMITTEE FOR SECOND READING**

**A. Policy 3097: Use of Video Monitoring Cameras**

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 3097: Use of Video Monitoring Cameras*. This policy has been updated to align with parental rights under House Bill 32, allowing video monitoring during events open to the public. At the last Policy Committee meeting, clarifying language was added to specify that no staff member or volunteer may make an audio or video recording of a student without parental permission. The Policy Committee determined that *Policy 3097: Use of Video Monitoring Cameras* would go before the full Board of Trustees for information.

**B. Policy 2165: Early Literacy Targeted Intervention**

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 2165: Early Literacy Targeted Intervention*. This policy has been updated to reflect current legislation, including the removal of lines 33 through 35, clarifying the definition of scholastic literacy and incorporating math into early targeted intervention programs. The Policy Committee

determined that *Policy 2165: Early Literacy Targeted Intervention* would go before the full Board of Trustees for information.

**C. Policy 1020: School Board Elections**

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 1020: School Board Elections*. This policy has been updated to reflect the changes to candidate filing deadlines and withdrawal under House Bill 406. There is also a requirement that school elections must be called at least 145 days before a regular election, but can be amended until 70 days prior to the election. There is an allowance for a period of 70 days to call a special election. Ballot certification must occur not less than 40 days before the election. The Policy Committee determined that *Policy 1020: School Board Elections* would go before the full Board of Trustees for information.

**VII. PRESENTATION OF POLICIES FOR FIRST READING**

**A. Policy 2103: Religion and Religious Activities**

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 2103: Religion and Religious Activities*. This policy has been updated to reflect changes to House Bill 343, which now requires—rather than simply permits—the district to release a student at the parent’s request (at least annually) for not less than one hour per week for formal religious instruction. Notable updates include the removal of the words “the Bible or other” on line 27 and the addition of language regarding release time for religious instruction on lines 48 through 55. The Policy Committee determined that *Policy 2103: Religion and Religious Activities* would go before the full Board of Trustees for information.

**B. Policy 3000: Equal Educational Opportunities**

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 3000: Equal Educational Opportunities*. The policy changes reflect Senate Bill 350 that permits schools districts and MHSA to prohibit participation of a home school student in extracurricular activities based upon the student either not being a US citizen or a resident of the state of Montana. The Policy Committee determined that *Policy 3000: Equal Educational Opportunities* would go before the full Board of Trustees for information.

**C. Policy 3410: Student Health/Physical Screenings/Examinations**

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 3410: Student Health/Physical Screenings/Examinations*. House Bill 599 requires that a district provide parents with notice of the right to opt out of physical or mental health screenings or surveys and to be notified of the results of any such screenings. The policy has been updated to align with this requirement. The Policy Committee determined that *Policy 3410: Student Health/Physical Screenings/Examinations* would go before the full Board of Trustees for information.

**D. Policy 4030: Cooperative Programs with Other Districts and Public Agencies**

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 4030: Cooperative Programs with Other Districts and Public Agencies*. The committee discussed that while the policy encourages cooperative programs and multi-district agreements—allowing districts to share funds, resources, and personnel—the language was unclear in certain areas. Questions arose regarding how these agreements intersect with interlocal agreements, dual credit or university partnerships, and sharing of specialized staff, particularly in rural areas. Because of these complexities and the need for clearer language around existing agreements and partnerships, the committee decided to bring the policy back for further review.

**E. Policy 5025: Employment and Assignment**

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 5025: Employment and Assignment*. Under House Bill 226, state penalties can be issued to employers for failing to comply with federal immigration laws and grants Montana Department of Labor and Industry subpoena power to determine compliance. Language was added to the policy on lines 14 and 15 stating “including, but not limited to verification that the employee is authorized to work in the United States.” The Policy Committee determined that *Policy 5025: Employment and Assignment* would go before the full Board of Trustees for information.

**F. Policy 5075: Termination of Employment**

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 5075: Termination of Employment*. This policy has been updated with a legal reference to House Bill 602. Under House Bill 602, in the process of nonrenewal of a nontenured teacher, if the recommendation for nonrenewal is for financial reasons, this is to be stated in the Board agenda posted before June 1st that is subject to public comment. The Policy Committee determined that *Policy 5075: Termination of Employment* would go before the full Board of Trustees for information.

**VIII. SUPERINTENDENT OR BOARD COMMENTS**

There were no further comments.

**IX. ADJOURNMENT**

Trustee Jennifer Walsh adjourned the meeting at 12:56 p.m.