



Superintendent
Rex Weltz
406-324-2000

Business Manager
Janelle Mickelson
406-324-2007

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING
Lincoln Center
1325 Poplar Street
December 2, 2025**

I. INTRODUCTIONS

II. REVIEW OF AGENDA

III. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

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

IV. REVIEW OCTOBER 7, 2025, BOARD POLICY MEETING MINUTES

V. POLICIES FOR SECOND READING – HAVE GONE TO FULL BOARD 1st READING

- A. 2005 School Year, Calendar and Day
- B. 2016 Human Sexuality and Identity Instruction
- C. 2100 Recognition of Native American Cultural Heritage
- D. 2140 Suicide Awareness and Prevention Training
- E. 4332 Display of Flags and Banners on District Property

VI. POLICIES RETURNING TO COMMITTEE FOR SECOND READING

- A. 3097 Video Surveillance
- B. 2165 Early Literacy Targeted Intervention
- C. 1020 School Board Elections

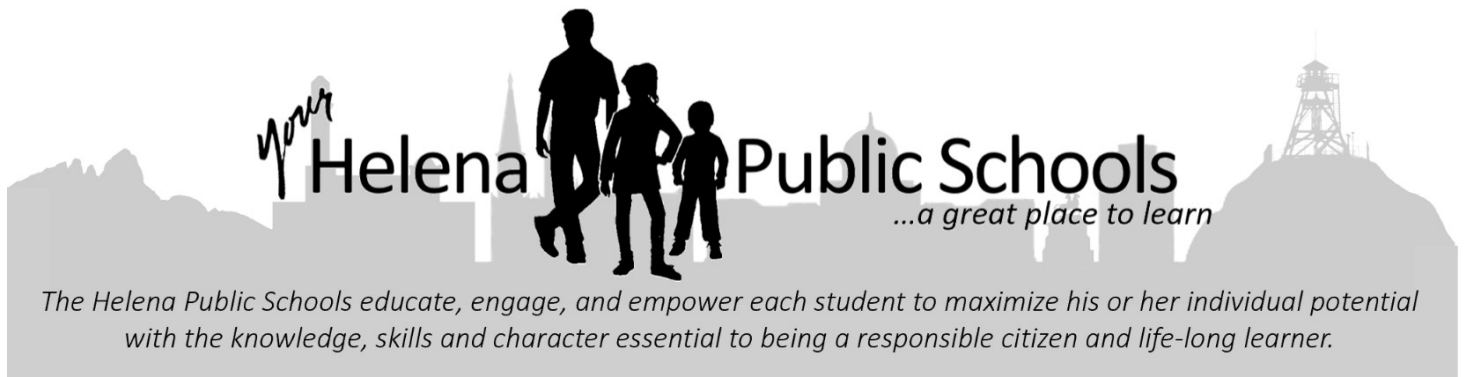
VII. PRESENTATION OF POLICIES FOR FIRST READING

- A. 2103 Religion and Religious Activities
- B. 3000 Equal Educational Opportunities
- C. 3410 Student Health/Physical Screenings/Examinations
- D. 4030 Cooperative Programs with Other Districts and Public Agencies
- E. 5025 Employment and Assignment
- F. 5075 Termination of Employment

VIII. SUPERINTENDENT OR BOARD COMMENTS

IX. ADJOURNMENT

**Next Meeting - January 6,
2026, at Noon Lincoln
Center Board Room**



Board of Trustees Policy Committee Meeting

Tuesday, October 7th, 2025
12:00 p.m.
Lincoln Center
1325 Poplar St., Helena, MT 59601
And via
TEAMS

MINUTES

Attendees

<i>Committee:</i>	<i>Others:</i>
Jennifer Walsh, Committee Chair	Josh McKay, Assistant Superintendent
Linda Cleatus, Trustee	Rex Weltz, Superintendent
	Todd Verrill, Facilities Director
	Jane Shawn, HEA President
	Bea Kaleva, District Legal Counsel
	Lona Carter, Student Health Services & Special Education Director
	Candice Delvaux, Executive Assistant
	Keri Mizell, Human Resources Director
	Janelle Mickelson, Business Director
	Justine Alberts, Assistant Superintendent PreK-5
	Gary Myers, Director of Educational Technology
	Taylor Lassiter, Communications Specialist
	Eric Peterson, Activities Director

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 12:01 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 5.5.2025 POLICY COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Policy Committee reviewed and accepted the minutes from the May 5th, 2025, Policy Committee meeting.

V. POLCIES FOR FIFTH READING

A. Policy 5055: Leaves of Absence

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 5055: Leaves of Absence*. The policy was revised to clarify language related to sick leave and bereavement leave not covered by a collective bargaining agreement. Also, noted was a change from nonrefundable sick leave donations to refundable sick leave donations for any unused donation. The committee suggested the word *permitted* on line 32 be changed to *allowed*. The Policy Committee determined that *Policy 5055: Leaves of Absence* would go before the full Board of Trustees for action.

B. Policy 5085: Substitutes and Student Teachers/Interns

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 5085: Substitutes and Student Teachers/Interns*. This policy has been revised to clarify how classified staff will be compensated when called upon to substitute for a teacher. The language in lines 16 through 19 was previously presented as a single paragraph and has now been separated into two sentences for improved clarity. The Policy Committee determined that *Policy 5085: Substitutes and Student Teachers/Interns* would go before the full Board of Trustees for action.

VI. POLCIES FOR SECOND READING

A. Policy 5051: Insurance Benefits for Employees

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 5051: Insurance Benefits for Employees*. Changes to the policy include the requirement that employees may only obtain insurance coverage outside the enrollment period due to a qualifying event, and that

medical examinations are no longer permitted for enrollment. The Policy Committee determined that *Policy 5051: Insurance Benefits for Employees* would go before the full Board of Trustees for action.

VII. PRESENTATION OF POLICIES FOR FIRST READING

A. Policy 1020: School Board Elections

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 1020: School Board Elections*. Ms. Bea Kaleva, District Legal Counsel, highlighted that recent statutory changes should be incorporated into the policy. The committee acknowledged this recommendation, agreed that the necessary revisions would be made, and determined that the updated policy would be brought back to the Policy Committee for further review.

B. Policy 2005: School Year, Calendar and Day

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 2005: School Year, Calendar and Day*. This policy has been updated to align with House Bill 591. The purpose is to educate students about the sacrifices made for freedom in the founding of the United States and the values on which the United States was founded. The Policy Committee determined that *Policy 2005: School Year, Calendar and Day* would go before the full Board of Trustees for information.

C. Policy 2016 Human Sexuality and Identity Instruction

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 2016 Human Sexuality and Identity Instruction*. This policy has been updated to align with the revised definition of human sexuality and identity instruction as defined in House Bill 471. The policy further clarifies the parent or guardian's right of consent for human sexuality instruction (opt out) and identity instruction (opt in) and the notice provisions. The Policy Committee determined that *Policy 2016 Human Sexuality and Identity Instruction* would go before the full Board of Trustees for information.

D. Policy 2100: Recognition of Native American Cultural Heritage

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 2100: Recognition of Native American Cultural Heritage*. The policy emphasizes that schools in close proximity with Montana Tribes will work in consultation when providing instruction and implementing education goals for the inclusion of cultural heritage of Native Americans. The committee agreed that the word *in* would be added after the word *working* on line 12. The Policy Committee determined that *Policy 2100: Recognition of Native American Cultural Heritage* would go before the full Board of Trustees for information.

E. Policy 2140: Suicide Awareness and Prevention Training

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 2140: Suicide Awareness and Prevention Training*. This policy has been updated to reflect the training timeline requirement of employees and clarifies 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 information.

F. Policy 3097: Video Surveillance

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed *Policy 3097: Video Surveillance*. Updated language on lines 27 through 29 states, “*The District may video record events open to the public, including but not limited to public performances, athletic competitions, or any rehearsals or practices open to the public without parental permission.*” After review, the Policy Committee recommends that the verbiage on line 22 be changed to state, “*No staff member may audio or video record a student in a classroom without permission of the parent.*” The Policy Committee determined that the updated policy would be brought back to the Policy Committee for further review.

G. 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 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 information.

VIII. SUPERINTENDENT OR BOARD COMMENTS

There were no further comments.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Jennifer Walsh adjourned the meeting at 12:50 p.m.

STUDENT INSTRUCTION

School Year, Calendar, and Day

Subject to §§ 20-1-301 and 20-1-308, MCA, and the District's collective bargaining agreement covering the employment of affected employees, the Board sets the number of days in a school term, the length of the school day, and the number of school days in a school week

When proposing to adopt changes to a previously adopted school term, school week, or school day, the Board shall: (a) if necessary, negotiate the changes with the recognized collective bargaining unit representing the employees affected by the changes; (b) solicit input from the employees affected by the changes but not represented by a collective bargaining agreement; and (c) solicit input from the people who live within the boundaries of the school district.

Saturday School

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.

Commemorative Exercises

All classes shall conduct appropriate exercises ~~during the school day~~ on the following commemorative days; ~~noted in Montana law.~~

Lincoln's Birthday (February 12)

Washington's Birthday (February 22)

Arbor Day (last Friday in April)

Flag Day (June 14)

Citizenship Day (September 17)

American Indian Heritage Day (fourth Friday in September)

Columbus Day (October 12)

Pioneer Day (November 1)

Freedom Week (last full week of September)

Other days designated by the Legislature or Governor as legal holidays

The Superintendent or designee shall develop appropriate exercises for these commemorative days and shall report on such exercises to the Board.

47 *School Holidays*

48
49 The schools in the District shall be closed on the following holidays: New Year's Day; Memorial
50 Day; Independence Day (2 days); Labor Day; Thanksgiving Day (2 days); Christmas Day;
51 Martin Luther King Day; President's Day; and State and national election days when the school
52 building is used as a polling place and the conduct of school would interfere with the election
53 process at the polling place. When these holidays fall on Saturday or Sunday, the preceding
54 Friday or the succeeding Monday shall be a school holiday. The Board may establish other
55 holidays.

56
57 *School Fiscal Year*

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59 At least the minimum number of aggregate hours must be conducted during each school fiscal
60 year. The minimum aggregate hours required by grade are:

- 61 (a) A minimum of 360 aggregate hours for a kindergarten program;
62 (b) 720 hours for grades 1 through 3;
63 (c) 1,080 hours for grades 4 through 12; and
64 (d) 1,050 hours may be sufficient for graduating seniors.

65
66 In addition, seven (7) pupil instruction-related days may be scheduled for the following
67 purposes:

- 68 1. Pre-school staff orientation for the purpose of organization of the school year (2
69 days);
70 2. Staff professional development programs (minimum of three (3) days);
71 3. Parent/teacher conferences (2 days); or
72 4. Records days (not to exceed one (1) day at the end of each semester or quarter).

73
74 *Professional Development*

75
76 The district recognizes that training and development are fundamental to ensure the quality of its
77 services to students. The Superintendent shall provide an organized program of professional
78 development designed to assist staff in acquiring the skills needed to work with all students.

79
80 A District professional development advisory committee will review, develop, recommend, and
81 evaluate the school district's professional development plan. Each year the Board of Trustees
82 shall be provided a copy of a professional development report for the previous school year.

83
84

85 Legal References:	§ 20-1-301, MCA	School fiscal year
86	§ 20-1-302, MCA	School day and week
87	§ 20-3-303, MCA	Conduct of school on Saturday or Sunday
88		Prohibited – exceptions
89	§ 20-1-305, MCA	School Holidays
90	§ 20-1-306, MCA	Commemorative exercises on certain days
91	§ 20-1-308, MCA	Religious instruction released time program
92	ARM 10.65.101-103	Pupil-Instruction-Related Days

93	ARM 10.55.714	Professional Development
94		
95		
96	Cross References:	
97		
98	Policy History:	
99	Adopted on:	2.28.2012
100	Revised on:	12.11.2017, 5.10.2022
101		

STUDENT INSTRUCTION

Human Sexuality Instruction and Identity Instruction

The District recognizes the right of a parent or guardian to withdraw a child from instruction or an organized school function regarding human sexuality instruction. Such withdrawals will be classified as an excused absence.

“Human sexuality instruction means “instruction that has the goal or purpose of studying, exploring, or informing students about any of the following human sexuality topics: intimate relationships, sexual anatomy, sexual reproduction, sexually transmitted infections, sexual acts, abstinence, contraception, or reproductive rights and responsibilities.” teaching or otherwise providing information about human sexuality, including intimate relationships, human sexual anatomy, sexual reproduction, sexually transmitted infections, sexual acts, sexual orientation, gender identity, abstinence, contraception, or reproductive rights and responsibilities.

The District recognizes the right of a parent or guardian to consent in writing to a child participating in identity instruction at the beginning of each school year. A child is excused from participating in identity instruction unless the child fails to attend the identity instruction after the parent or guardian has consented to the child’s attendance in such instruction. A parent or guardian may withdraw permission for a child to participate in identity instruction at any time by providing written notice to the Superintendent.

“Identity instruction” means “instruction that has the goal or purpose of studying, exploring, or informing students about gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation.”

“Instruction” means the “conduct of organized learning activities, including the provision of materials, for students in a public school, whether conducted by a teacher or other school staff or guests invited at the request of the school or district and regardless of the duration, venue, or method of delivery.”

A teacher’s response to an unexpected student-initiated inquiry related to topics under this policy are not considered “human sexuality instruction” or “identity instruction” to the extent the response is necessary to resolve the inquiry or to maintain civility and decorum in the classroom.

Annual Notice and Availability of Materials

Using the contact information most recently provided by the parent or guardian, the District shall annually notify in advance the parent or guardian of each student scheduled to be enrolled in a course that includes units or lessons on human sexuality instruction or identity instruction in advance of the instruction regarding:

- the basic content of the human sexuality instruction or identity instruction intended to be taught and the option to review all curriculum materials related to human sexuality instruction or identity instruction in the course;
- the parent or guardian's right to withdraw the student from ~~such~~ human sexuality instruction; and
- the requirement for parental/guardian written permission to allow a child to attend identity instruction.

As part of the annual notice, the District will provide an electronic link to materials or summaries of materials, consistent with copyright laws, for:

- its health enhancement curriculum, including lesson plans or other materials used for human sexuality instruction or identity instruction; and
- a calendar of events or assemblies at which human sexuality instruction or identity instruction will be provided.

The District will make curriculum materials used in human sexuality instruction or identity instruction available for public inspection before use. This will occur on an annual basis. A summary of the District's health enhancement curriculum will be available for public review each year.

~~48-Hour~~ Notice Prior to Events, Assemblies, or Introduction of Materials

Parents and guardians will be notified at least ~~48 hours~~ 5 school days but not more than 14 school days prior to holding an event or assembly or first introducing material for instructional use. Additional notices are not required.

~~48 Hour~~ Notice

~~Parents and guardians will be notified no less than 48 hours prior to holding an event or assembly or introducing material for instructional use.~~

This notice will contain:

- 1) ~~the basic content of the district's or school's human sexuality instruction; and~~
- 2) ~~the right to withdraw the student from the instruction~~

~~Annual Availability of Materials~~

~~The District will make curriculum materials used in human sexuality instruction available for public inspection before use. This will occur on an annual basis.~~

No Abortion Curriculum

In compliance with Montana law, the District will not allow personnel to offer, sponsor, or furnish any course materials or instruction relating to human sexuality or sexually transmitted infections if the person or entity provides abortion services.

Legal References:	Senate Bill 99 § 20-5-103, MCA 10.55.701, ARM	Parameters for K-12 Human Sexuality Education Compulsory attendance and excuses (<i>Revised by Senate Bill 99</i>) Board of Trustees
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Cross References:	Policy 2015	Curriculum Development, Content, and Assessment
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Policy History:

Adopted on:	11.9.2021
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Revised on:	
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STUDENT INSTRUCTION

Recognition of Native American Cultural Heritage

The District recognizes the distinct and unique cultural heritage of Native Americans and is committed in the District's educational goals to the preservation of such heritage.

In furtherance of the District's educational goals, the District is committed to:

- Working ~~cooperatively~~ in consultation with Montana Tribes in close proximity to the District, when providing instruction, when implementing educational goals or adopting rules relating to education of students in the District;
- Periodically reviewing its curriculum to ensure the inclusion of cultural heritage of Native Americans, which will include but not necessarily be limited to:
 - Considering methods by which to provide books and materials reflecting authentic historical and contemporary portrayals of Native Americans;
 - Taking into account individual and cultural diversity and differences among students;
 - Providing necessary training for school personnel, with the objective of gaining an understanding and awareness of Native American culture, which will assist the District's staff in its relations with Native American students and parents.

The Board requires certified staff to satisfy the requirements for instruction in American Indian studies when required by Montana law.

Legal Reference: [Art. X, Sec. 1\(2\), Montana Constitution](#)
[§§ 20-1-501, et seq., MCA](#) [Indian Education for All](#) (*revised by House Bill 338*)
[10.55.603 ARM](#) [Curriculum and Assessment](#)
[10.55.803 ARM](#) [Learner Access](#)
[10.55.901 ARM](#) [Basic Education Program: Elementary](#)
[10.55.902 ARM](#) [Basic Education Program: Junior High, 7th and 8th Grade Program, or Middle School](#)
[10.55.904 ARM](#) [Basic Education Program Offerings: High School](#)

Policy History:

Adopted on: 3.9.2004

Revised on: 1.9.2024

Reviewed on:

STUDENT INSTRUCTION

Suicide Awareness and Prevention Training

The Board is committed to protecting the health and well-being of all District students. The Board directs the Superintendent or designee to develop a program and associated procedures to prevent, assess the risk of, intervene in, and respond to suicide. The District's suicide prevention program shall be consistent with federal and state law and guidance provided by the Office of Public Instruction.

The District will provide a comprehensive suicide education program within the context of approved curriculum. The District will provide training to administrators, support staff and other school staff in preventing, assessing the risk of, intervening in, and responding to students at risk of suicide. The training shall be made available annually, but employees working directly with students are required to participate in a minimum of one (1) two (2) hours of training every three (3) five (5) years. The training shall be provided at no cost to District personnel and shall be consistent with approved material provided by the Office of Public Instruction. **Training may be delivered in-person or through videoconference, self-study of designated materials, or self-review of online modules approved by the District.**

Legal References: MCA § 20-7-1310 Youth suicide awareness and prevention training

Cross References:

Policy History:

Adopted on: 1.9.2018
Reviewed on: 12.3.2024
Revised on:

1 **Helena Public Schools**

2
3 **SCHOOL / COMMUNITY RELATIONS**

4332

4
5 Display of Flags and Banners on District Property

6 The District permits only the following flags and banners to be displayed on district or school
7 property:

- 8 • The U.S. flag
- 9 • The official flag of the state of Montana or any county, municipality, special district, or
10 other political subdivision within the State
- 11 • The official flag of a school district, public university, or community college
- 12 • The official flag of any state in the U.S.
- 13 • The official flag of any federally recognized tribal nation
- 14 • The official flag of any federally recognized foreign nation
- 15 • The official flag of any branches and units of the U.S. military
- 16 • Official historical flags of the U.S. and the state of Montana, including but not limited to
17 the Betsy Ross flag, Gadsen flag, or other flags of historical significance
- 18 • The POW/MIA flag
- 19 • Flags or banners representing official school mascots and colors
- 20 • Official law enforcement flags, including but not limited to flags honoring law
21 enforcement officers and fallen officers

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23 Legal Reference: *House Bill 819*

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25 Policy History:

26 Adopted on:

27 Reviewed on:

28 Revised on:

STUDENTS

Use of Video Monitoring Cameras Policy

The Board recognizes the need to provide a safe learning environment for students and staff. Therefore, the Board authorizes the use of video cameras on District property to assist in ensuring the health, welfare, and safety of all staff, students, and visitors to District property and to safeguard District buildings, grounds, and equipment.

Video cameras will also 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 Superintendent or designee is responsible for the implementation of safety and security measures at each building and the proper use of video monitoring systems. Cameras will be utilized to monitor activity in common areas such as hallways and parking lots. Only employees authorized by the Superintendent may use and/or monitor the video surveillance system.

No staff member **or volunteer** may **make an** use **audio or** video **recording of a student surveillance in a classroom** without permission of the parent.

To protect the privacy rights of staff, students, and visitors all state and federal statutes will be followed.

The District may video record events open to the public, including but not limited to public performances, athletic competitions, or any rehearsals or practices open to the public, without parental permission.

Signs shall be posted at various locations to inform students, staff and the public that video monitoring cameras are in use. The video monitoring of school buildings and grounds will not include audio recordings unless specific notice is given as required by law.

Cross References:

Legal Reference:	§45-8-213, MCA	Privacy in Communications
	§ 40-6-701, MCA	Interference with fundamental rights of parents restricted (<i>revised by House Bill 32</i>)

Policy History:

Adopted on:	9.11.2012
Revised on:	10.10.2023

INSTRUCTION

Early Literacy Targeted Intervention Programs

The Board seeks to collaborate with the Board of Public Education and the Office of Public Instruction to provide parents with voluntary early scholastic literacy targeted interventions for their children.

Scholastic literacy means a comprehensive competency in a variety of academic standards and developmental domains necessary to prepare a child to be successful in the child's primary, secondary, and postsecondary pursuits. The academic standards include English language arts, literacy, mathematics and numeracy.

Program goals include:

1. Increasing the number of children who are reading and math proficient at the end of 3rd grade,
2. Helping children develop their full educational potential pursuant to Article X, Section (1)(1) of the Montana Constitution, and
3. Fostering a strong economic return for the state on early scholastic literacy investment through enhancing Montana's skilled workforce and decreasing future reliance on social programs and the criminal justice systems.

A child is eligible for an Early Scholastic Literacy Targeted Intervention Program if, based upon an assessment administered at the request of and with the consent of the child's parent or guardian, the child is evaluated to be below trajectory for 3rd grade reading or math proficiency for the child's age or grade level for the subsequent school year. A child's eligibility must be reevaluated using the evaluation methodology at least annually. The assessment used shall be in accordance with the methodology approved by the Board of Public Education.

~~The Board may opt to enroll on target students into the classroom or jumpstart targeted intervention program and may admit one on target child for every five eligible children enrolled in the classroom or jumpstart targeted intervention program.~~

The Board has determined it will offer the following Early Scholastic Literacy Targeted Intervention Program(s) for an eligible child:

A full-time based program for eligible children who are four (4) years of age or older on or before September 10 of the year in which the children are to participate in the program and are not entering and have not completed kindergarten. ~~A parent/guardian may enroll an eligible child in full-time classroom-based program on a part-time basis.~~ The classroom based program must align with developmentally appropriate early education learning standards determined by the Board of Public Education.

47 A jumpstart program for eligible children who are aged five years of age or older on or
48 before September 10 of the year in which the children are to participate in the program and
49 who have not yet completed 3rd grade. The jumpstart program shall occur during the time
50 between the end of one school calendar year and the start of the next school calendar year as
51 determined by the Board preceding a child's entry into kindergarten, 1st grade, 2nd grade, or
52 3rd grade. The jumpstart program shall be at least 4 weeks in duration and provide at least 120
53 instructional hours and be aligned to the framework determined by the Board of Public
54 Education. The jumpstart program shall be designed in a manner to increase the likelihood of
55 a child being evaluated at the end of the ensuring school year to be at or above a trajectory
56 leading to reading and math proficiency at the end of 3rd grade.

57
58 Cross Reference: 3110 Entrance, Transfer, and Placement
59 Legal Reference: § 20-7-1801, *et seq*, MCA Early Literacy Targeted Interventions
60 Title 10, Chapter 63, ARM Early Childhood Education Standard
61 (Eff. July 1, 2025)
62

63 Policy History:
64 Adopted on: 05.14.2024
65 Reviewed on:
66 Revised on:
67
68

SCHOOL DISTRICT ORGANIZATION

School Board Elections

School board elections are non-partisan elections governed by the general election laws of the State of Montana and include election of board members, various public policy propositions, and advisory questions.

Board elections shall be held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in May of each year. In years when the legislature meets in regular session or in a special session that affects school funding, the trustees may order the election on a date other than the regular school election day in order for the electors to consider a proposition requesting additional funding under § 20-9-353, MCA.

Any person who is a qualified voter of the District is legally qualified to become a trustee. Some persons may be ineligible for board membership by reason of other public offices held or certain types of State or federal employment. A Declaration of intent to be a candidate shall be submitted to the **District Clerk no sooner than 145 days, and no later than 85 days** ~~Election Administrator at least forty (40) days~~ before the regular school election day. If there are different terms to be filled, the term for the position for which each candidate is filing must also be indicated.

Any person seeking to become a write-in candidate must file a declaration of intent on the **65th** ~~26th~~ day before the election. If the number of candidates filing for vacant positions or filing a declaration of intent to be a write-in candidate is equal to or less than the number of positions to be elected, the Trustees may give notice that a Trustee election will not be held. Notice of the cancellation must be given no later than 30 days before the election date. If the election is not held, the trustees shall declare the candidates elected by acclamation and issue of “certificate of election” to each candidate.

A candidate intending to withdraw from the election shall send a statement of withdrawal to the Clerk of the District containing all information necessary to identify the candidate and the office for which the candidate filed. The statement of withdrawal must be acknowledged by the Clerk of the District. A candidate may not withdraw after 5:00p.m. **on the 85th day before the election.** ~~the day before the election ballot certification deadline in 20-20-401. MCA.~~

Except in the event of an unforeseen emergency occurring on the date scheduled for the election, a proposition requesting additional funding pursuant to § 20-9-353, MCA, may be submitted to the electors only once each calendar year – on the regular school election day.

The District will comply with Montana law in providing access to voting places and accessibility for individuals with disabilities.

Legal References:

- § 13-1-101 Definitions
- § 13-10-211, MCA Declaration of intent for write-in candidates
- § 15-10-425, MCA Mill levy election (*Revised by House Bill 543*)

42 § 20-3-304, MCA Annual election
 43 § 20-3-305, MCA Candidate qualification, ~~nomination~~ filing deadline, and withdrawal
 44 § 20-3-313, MCA Election by acclamation – notice
 45 § 20-3-322, MCA Meetings and quorum
 46 § 20-3-324(4), MCA Powers and duties
 47 § 20-3-344, MCA Nomination of candidates by petition in first-class elementary district
 48 § 20-9-353, MCA Additional financing for general fund election for authorization to
 49 impose
 50 § 20-9-426, MCA Preparation and form of ballots for bond election (*Revised by House*
 51 *Bill 543*)
 52 § 20-20-105, MCA Regular school election and special school elections
 53 § 20-20-204, MCA Election Notice
 54 § 20-20-301, MCA Qualifications of elector
 55 ~~§ 13-1-101, MCA Definitions (*Revised by Senate Bill 15*)~~
 56 **Senate Bill 15** **Revises election laws related to accessibility for disabled electors**
 57

58 Cross References:

59

60 Policy History:

61 Adopted on: 2.8.2011

62 Revised on: 7.12.2016, 3.8.2022, 10.10.2023

63

STUDENT INSTRUCTION

Religion and Religious Activities

In keeping with the United States and Montana Constitutions and judicial decisions, the District may not support any religion or endorse religious activity. At the same time, the District may not prohibit private religious expression by students.

Student Prayer and Discussion

Students may pray individually or in groups and may discuss their religious views with other students, as long as they are not disruptive or coercive. The right to engage in voluntary prayer does not include the right to have a captive audience listen or to harass other students. Students may pray silently in the classroom, except when they are expected to be involved in classroom instruction or activities.

Staff Members

Staff members may not encourage, discourage, persuade, dissuade, sponsor, participate in, or discriminate against a religious activity or an activity because of its religious content while in the course of performing official duties of that staff member's position(s) with the District.

Assemblies, Extracurricular and Athletic Events

District officials may not invite or permit members of the clergy, staff members, or outsiders to give prayers at school-sponsored assemblies and extracurricular or athletic events. District officials also may not organize or agree to student requests for prayer at assemblies and other school-sponsored events. Furthermore, prayer may not be broadcast over the school public address system, even if the prayer is nonsectarian, non-proselytizing, and initiated by students.

Student Religious Expression and Assignments

Students may express their individual religious beliefs in reports, tests, homework, and projects. Staff members should judge their work by ordinary academic standards, including substance, relevance, appearance, composition, and grammar. Student religious expression should neither be favored nor penalized. 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.

Graduation Ceremonies

In order to assure the appropriateness and dignity of the occasion, the District sponsors and pays for graduation ceremonies and retains ultimate control over their structure and content. District officials may not invite or permit members of the clergy to give prayers at graduation. Furthermore, District officials may not organize or agree to requests for prayer by other persons at graduation, including requests from students. The District may not prefer the beliefs of some

students over the beliefs of others, coerce dissenters or nonbelievers, or communicate any endorsement of religion.

Religion in the Curriculum

Staff members may teach students about religion in history, art, music, literature, and other subjects in which religious influence has been and continues to be felt. However, staff members may not teach religion or advocate religious doctrine or practice. The prohibition against teaching religion extends to curricular decisions which promote religion or religious beliefs.

School programs, performances, and celebrations must serve an educational purpose. The inclusion of religious music, symbols, art, or writings is permitted, if the religious content has a historical or independent educational purpose which contributes to the objectives of the approved curriculum. School programs, performances, and celebrations cannot promote, encourage, discourage, persuade, dissuade, or discriminate against a religion or religious activity and cannot be oriented to religion or a religious holiday.

Release time for Religious Instruction

The District shall provide religious instruction release time under which a student may be released for one (1) hour per week. Provided that:

- **Parental request is provided, in writing, for release time. This request will be renewed annually, or at a quarter, semester, etc., as students change their school class schedule.**
- **The release time is for formal instruction and not for church social activities such as ski trips, campouts, etc.**

Student Religious Clubs

Students may organize clubs to discuss or promote religion, subject to the same constitutionally acceptable restrictions the District imposes on other student-organized clubs.

Distribution of Religious Literature

Students may distribute religious literature to their classmates, subject to the same constitutionally acceptable restrictions the District imposes on distribution of other non-school literature. Outsiders may not distribute religious or other literature to students on school property, consistent with and pursuant to the District policy on solicitations.

Religious Holidays

Staff members may teach objectively about religious holidays and about religious symbols, music, art, literature, and drama which accompany the holidays. They may celebrate the historical aspects of the holidays but may not observe them as religious events.

69

70 Legal Reference: Kennedy v. Bremerton Sch. Dist., 142 S. Ct. 2407 (2022)
71 Art. II, Sec. 5, Montana Constitution - Freedom of religion
72 § 20-7-112, MCA Sectarian publications prohibited, religious materials
73 allowed, prayer permitted (revised by House Bills 744, 745)
74 **§ 20-1-308, MCA Religious instruction released time program**
75

76 Cross Reference: Policy 2085 Graduation Requirements
77 Policy 2090 Credit Transfer and Assessment for Placement
78

79 Policy History:
80 Adopted on: 2.12.2013
81 Revised on: 1.9.2024
82 Reviewed on:

STUDENTS

Equal Educational Opportunities

Equal educational and extracurricular opportunities shall be available for all students without regard to race, color, religion, creed, national origin, sex, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, ancestry, marital status, military status, citizenship status, culture, social origin or condition, political affiliation, mental, physical or sensory handicap, or by any other distinguishing characteristic and other legally protected categories.

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 complaint by using the Section 504 / ADA Grievance Procedures for claims relating to disability discrimination, the Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedures for claims of sexual harassment, or the Uniform Grievance Procedure for all other claims.

Students in private or home school have the right to participate in extracurricular activities in public schools. The District will not restrict extracurricular participation of students in private school or home school based on their enrollment at the public school except as permitted by law. Students in a private or home school seeking to participate in an extracurricular activity shall be required to provide proof of identity and residency to participate.

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 pursuant to Title IX and its regulations. Any student may file a sex equity complaint by using the District's Uniform Grievance Procedures.

Inquiries regarding discrimination of any kind should be directed to the building administrator or District's Title IX Coordinator, who shall provide information and, if necessary, direct the individual to the appropriate grievance procedures. Inquiries regarding sex discrimination or sexual harassment may also be directed to the District's Title IX Coordinator, the Assistant Secretary for the U.S. Department of Education, or both. The District will annually publish notice of these rights to students and parents.

The District will not deny or allow educational opportunity based on vaccine status, except those vaccines required by law.

Legal References:	§ 49-2-307, MCA	Discrimination in education
	§ 49-3-201, MCA et seq	Governmental Code of Fair Practices
	20 USC 1681 et seq	Title IX
	42 USC § 12111 et seq.	Americans with Disabilities Act
	29 USC § 791 et seq.	Rehabilitation Act of 1973
	28 CFR 35.107	Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability in State and Local Government Services
	34 CFR 104.7	Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Handicap in Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance

52	34 CFR Part 106	Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in
53		Education
54	10.55.701, ARM	Board of Trustees
55	<u>§ 20-5-112, MCA</u>	<u>Participation in extracurricular activities</u>
56		<u>(revised by Senate Bill 350)</u>
57	<u>§ 20-5-109, MCA</u>	<u>Nonpublic school requirements for</u>
58		<u>compulsory enrollment exemption</u>
59	<u>§ 49-2-312, MCA</u>	<u>Discrimination based on vaccination</u>
60		<u>status or possession of immunity passport</u>
61		<u>prohibited</u>
62		
63		
64	Cross References:	<u>Board Policy 3010</u>
65		<u>School Admissions: Entrance, Placement</u>
66		<u>and Transfer</u>
67		<u>Board Policy 3005</u>
68		<u>Bullying Intimidation Harassment &</u>
69	<u>Policy History:</u>	<u>Hazing Prevention and Reporting</u>
70	Adopted on:	2.10.2015
71	Revised on:	2.09.2021
72	Reviewed on:	1.7.2025

2
3 **STUDENTS**

4
5 Student Health/Physical Screenings/Examinations

6
7 Health services to be provided to all students may take place annually. Such services
8 may include but are not limited to:

- 9
10 1. Development of procedures at each building for isolation and temporary care of
11 students who become ill during the school day;
12 2. Consulting services of a qualified specialist for staff, students, and parents;
13 3. Vision and hearing screening;
14 4. Dental screening;
15 5. Immunization as provided by the Department of Public Health and Human
16 Services.

17
18 ~~Parents will be notified of the specific or approximate dates during the school year~~
19 ~~when standard screenings administered by the District will be conducted. Standard~~
20 ~~screenings are not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student~~
21 ~~or other students and are noted in the Student / Parent Handbook. Parents will receive~~
22 ~~written notice of any screening result which indicates a condition that might interfere or~~
23 ~~tend to interfere with a student's progress. Parents or eligible students will be given the~~
24 ~~opportunity to opt out of the above-described screenings.~~

25
26 Physical Examinations

27
28 **Parents will receive written notice of any physical or mental health screening**
29 **result.**

30
31 Parents or eligible students will be given the opportunity to opt out **of physical or**
29 **mental health screenings**. The District will not conduct physical examinations of a
30 ~~student without parental consent unless ordered by a court to do so or there is a~~
31 ~~concern for the health or safety of the student or others is in question. **Further**, parents~~
32 ~~will be notified of the specific or approximate dates during the school year when **a**~~
33 **physical or mental health** screening administered by the District will be conducted.

34
35 Students who wish to participate in certain extracurricular activities may be required to
36 submit to a physical examination to verify their ability to participate in the activity.

37
38 All parents will be notified of requirements of the District's policy on physical
39 examinations and screening of students, at least annually at the beginning of the school
40 year and within a reasonable period of time after any substantive change in the policy.

41

42 Legal Reference: § 20-3-324(20), MCA
43 § 40-6-701, MCA
44
45 20 U.S.C. 1232h(b)
46
47

Powers and duties
Interference with Fundamental Parental
Rights Restricted – Cause of Action
General Provisions Concerning Education

48 Policy History:

49 Adopted on: 9.10.2024

50 Revised on:

51 Reviewed on:

52

53

54

2 **COMMUNITY RELATIONS**3 Cooperative Programs with Other Districts and Public Agencies

4 Whenever it appears to the economic, administrative, and/or educational advantage of the
5 District to participate in cooperative programs with other units of local government, the
6 Superintendent will conduct an analysis of each cooperative proposal.

7 When formal cooperative agreements are developed, such agreements shall comply with
8 requirements of the Interlocal Cooperation Act, with assurances that all parties to the agreement
9 have legal authority to engage in the activities contemplated by the agreement.

10 The District may enter into interlocal agreements with a unit of the Montana University System,
11 public community college, and/or tribal college, which would allow students enrolled in the 11th
12 and 12th grades to attend and earn credit for classes not available in the District. Tuition and
13 fees, if assessed, will be provided for in the interlocal agreement.

14 The District may enter into an interlocal agreement providing for the sharing of teachers,
15 specialists, superintendents, or other professional persons licensed under Montana statute. If the
16 District shares a teacher or specialist with another district(s), the District's share of such
17 teacher's or specialist's compensation will be based on the total number of instructional hours
18 expended by the teacher or the specialist in the District.

19
20 The District may enter a multidistrict agreement with one or more districts for a district to
21 provide culturally rooted instruction aligned to a learning environment for English language
22 learners or an Indian language immersion program to pupils of a district participating in the
23 multidistrict agreement. **The District may enter into a countywide multidistrict agreement**
24 **for countywide resource sharing or a multicounty regional multidistrict agreement.**

25
26

Legal Reference: [§ 7-11-101, et seq., MCA Interlocal Cooperation Act](#)
 [§ 20-3-363 MCA Multidistrict agreements – fund](#)
 [transfers \(revised HB 214\)](#)
 [§ 20-7-451 through 456, MCA Authorization to create full-service](#)
 [education cooperatives](#)
 [§ 20-7-801, et seq., MCA Public recreation](#)

Policy History:

Adopted on: 11.11.2014

Revised on: 1.9.2024

27
28

PERSONNEL

Employment and Assignment

Each certificated employee will be employed under a written contract, subject to the terms and conditions of the collective bargaining agreement, District policies and procedures, and state and federal statutes. The Board, after receiving the recommendations of the Superintendent, will determine the non-renewal or termination of certified and classified staff, in conformity with state statutes, applicable District policies and procedures, and collective bargaining agreements.

Classified employees whose positions are covered by a collective bargaining agreement will be employed subject to the terms and conditions of the collective bargaining agreement, District policies and procedures, and state and federal statutes. Classified employees whose positions are not covered by a collective bargaining agreement will be subject to a one-year probationary period. Their employment is governed by District policies and procedures, and state and federal statutes, **including, but not limited to verification that the employee is authorized to work in the United States**. The District reserves the right to change employment conditions affecting an employee's duties, assignment, and/or supervisor, subject to collective bargaining language.

Assignment, Reassignment and Transfer

The Superintendent may assign, reassign, and/or transfer positions and duties of all staff, subject to any provisions contained in the collective bargaining agreements, District policies and procedures and state and federal statutes. Nothing in this policy prevents reassignment of a staff member during a school year.

Legal References:	§ 39-2-904, MCA	Elements of wrongful discharge
	§ 39-2-912, MCA	Exemptions (wrongful discharge)
	10.57.601a, ARM	Definition of Immoral Conduct
	<i>House Bill 226</i>	<u>Legal Employment and Government Accountability Law</u>

Cross Reference:	<u>Policy 5122</u>	<u>Criminal Background Investigation</u>
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Policy History:

Adopted on:	8.13.2013
Revised on:	6.11.2019

2 PERSONNEL

3 Termination of Employment

4
5 *Dismissal and Non-renewal*

6
7 The Board, after receiving the recommendations of the Superintendent, will determine the non-
8 renewal or termination of certified and classified staff, in conformity with state statutes and
9 applicable District policies.

10
11 *Resignation*

12
13 Certified and classified personnel will generally be expected to fulfill the terms of their contracts,
14 unless clearly compelling, mitigating circumstances prevent the individual from doing so. The
15 Superintendent is authorized to accept the resignation of an individual employee and must report
16 such resignation to the Board at the next regularly scheduled meeting. A certified employee who
17 resigns after signing a contract with the District may face disciplinary action related to the
18 employee's certificate.

19
20 *Reduction in Force*

21
22 The Board has exclusive authority to determine the appropriate number of employees. A
23 reduction in employees may occur as a result of, but not be limited to, changes in the education
24 program, staff realignment, changes in the size or nature of the student population, financial
25 considerations, or other reasons deemed relevant by the Board.

26
27 The Board will consider in no particular order all or some of the following criteria in determining
28 order of dismissal when it reduces staff;

- 29
30
 - performance evaluations,
 - 31 • staff needs,
 - 32 • seniority,
 - 33 • experience inside and outside the district,
 - 34 • professional development,
 - 35 • curricular or industry knowledge,
 - 36 • endorsements and/or certifications, and / or
 - 37 • other reasons it deems relevant.

38
39 For any employees covered by a collective bargaining agreement the Board will follow the
40 procedure stated in the current CBA when considering a reduction in force.

