



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.

Steering Committee

HPS Pay Plan Rules

Thursday, December 18, 2025

Lincoln Center Board of Trustees Conference Room

3:30 p.m.

MINUTES

ATTENDEES

Janet Armstrong, Trustee	Justine Alberts, Assistant Superintendent PreK-5
Jim Kerins, CMS	Kay Satre, Trustee
Avra Branson, Par Educator	Taylor Lassiter, Communications Officer
Keri Mizell, Human Resources Director	Anna Alger, Educator
Sam Holman, Business Director	Gary Myers, Director of Educational Technology
Kirstan Roush, SACC Coordinator	Kathy Kidder, CHS Assistant Principal
	Shane Snyder, Senior Infrastructure & Information Systems Manger

I. CALL TO ORDER

Trustee Kay Satre called the meeting to order at 3:34 p.m.

II. REVIEW OF AGENDA

The agenda was reviewed, and no changes were requested.

III. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no general public comment.

IV. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/DISCUSSION

A. Review of the 2025 Pay Plan Recommendation

The Steering Committee reviewed the proposed 2025 Pay Plan Recommendation with a focus on ensuring long-term consistency, transparency, and sustainability of the district's compensation system. Committee members emphasized the importance of institutionalizing the pay plan through formal rules, policies, and committee oversight so that the system remains stable and consistent across changes in leadership.

The committee reaffirmed the district's compensation philosophy, noting that the pay plan is designed to be fiscally responsible, reflect employee experience and levels of organizational responsibility, comply with applicable laws for both certified and non-certified staff, and remain sustainable, consistent, and respectful of all employees. Members also discussed the importance of regularly assessing market conditions to ensure the district's compensation practices remain competitive and up to date.

Updates to the Pay Plan Rules were reviewed, including the addition of introductory language clarifying the purpose of the rules and their alignment with the compensation philosophy. Revisions were made to improve organization and clarity, including the addition of definitions related to employee movement, salary matrix and placement, and overtime eligibility. These changes were described as structural and clarifying in nature, rather than introducing substantive new content.

The committee discussed employee movement between independent positions and collective bargaining agreement (CBA) positions, confirming that pay adjustments will be governed by the rules of the position to which an employee moves. The salary matrix and placement process was reviewed with the long-term goal of expanding it to include administrative roles.

Overtime eligibility provisions were reviewed to ensure compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act. The committee also discussed initial pay assignment practices, including built-in flexibility for Human Resources to place new employees above the entry step, up to a defined limit, based on qualifications. This flexibility is intended to support recruitment while maintaining consistency and oversight.

A significant addition to the Pay Plan Rules is the proposed use of training assignments. Training assignments are intended to address recruitment challenges by allowing the district to hire candidates who may not yet meet all minimum qualifications but demonstrate strong potential. Under this approach, employees may be hired at a lower classification level with a documented development plan outlining base pay, progression milestones, required qualifications,

performance expectations, and a defined time frame, not to exceed one year. Training assignments were discussed as a tool that supports workforce development, internal career pathways, and the district’s “grow your own” initiative.

Committee members expressed strong support for the direction of the pay plan and the work completed to date, noting that the structure and consistency provided by the rules improve accountability, fairness, and clarity for employees. Appreciation was expressed for the thoroughness and progress of the work, and for its role in strengthening the district’s overall compensation framework.

V. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:14 p.m.