



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 Work Session

Tuesday, February 24, 2026

PAL

815 Front St., Helena, MT, 59601

& Via TEAMS

4:00 p.m.

Members of the public can attend in person or remotely by clicking the link below:

[Join the meeting now](#)

AGENDA

I. CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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. PRESENTATION

Principal Matt Carey, PAL

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Consent Action Items

1. 1/27/26 Board of Trustees Work Session Meeting Minutes
2. Personnel Actions

B. Item for Action

1. Consideration of Authorization to Utilize Available Bond Premium and Interest Funds for Facility Parity Between Helena High School and Capital High School

C. Item for Information

1. Removal of Facilities Warehouses in Preparation for District Kitchen Construction

VI. BOARD/SUPERINTENDENT COMMENTS

VII. ADJOURNMENT

**HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board of Trustees Meeting**

Meeting Date: 2/24/2026

Item I.

Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Review of Agenda

General Public Comment

Presentation

Consent Action Items

Item for Action

Item for Information

Board/Superintendent Comments

Adjournment

Item Title: **Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance**

**HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board of Trustees Meeting**

Item II.

Meeting Date: 2/24/2026

Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Review of Agenda

General Public Comment

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Item for Action

Item for Information

Board/Superintendent Comments

Adjournment

Item Title: Review of Agenda

**HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board of Trustees Meeting**

Item III.

Meeting Date: 2/24/2026

Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Review of Agenda

General Public Comment

Presentation

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Board/Superintendent Comments

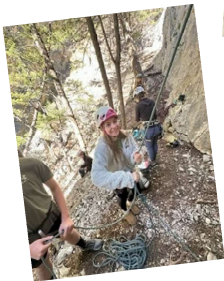
Adjournment

Item Title: General Public Comment

Graduation Requirements

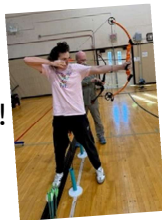
- 23 Credits are required to graduate from PAL
 - o 4 English
 - o 3 Math
 - o 1 Social Studies
 - o 2 Science
 - o 1.5 Physical Education
 - o .5 Health
 - o 1 Art
 - o 1 Government
 - o 1 American History
 - o 1 CTE/Vocational
 - o 7 Electives
- Credit requirements are the same as Helena and Capital High...but classes are much different!

EconoQuest and World Affairs!



Rock Climbing!

Archery and Trekking/Tracking!



Numbers To Know

Free/Reduced -57%

IEP Students – 18%

504 Students – 26%

McKinney Vento – 12%

Graduation Rate – 88% (class of 2025)



ACT Growth

Average Comp. Scores

2024 – 15.2

2025 – 16.7

Enrollment

Freshman – 9

Sophomore – 14

Junior – 33

Senior – 29

Total - 85

Students attend PAL through an application process every quarter. Students start in orientation and work into academy



PROJECT FOR ALTERNATIVE LEARNING



This is our school: a place of knowledge, tolerance, respect and understanding. We welcome the people who want to be here, and we invite them to share in our unique learning community.

T – Tolerance

A – Acceptance

R – Respect

P – Pride

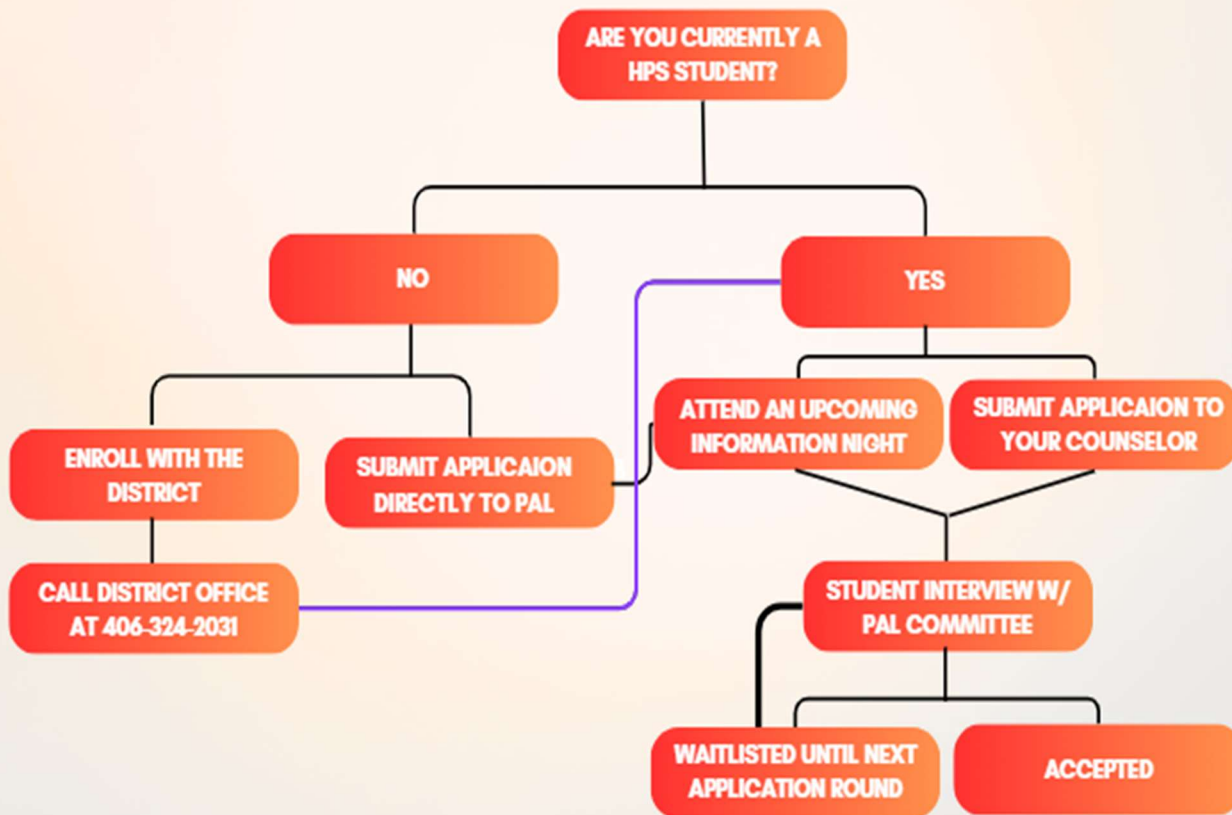
I – Individuallity

T – Trust

Web - pal.helenaschools.org

Phone - 406-324-1630

BECOMING A PAL STUDENT



PAL accepts students on a quarterly basis. Students and families complete an application, found on the PAL website or in the building, and submit it directly to PAL or their HPS school counselor. Students who are waitlisted are included in the next quarter's applicant pool

Community Partnerships / Life After PAL



We pride ourselves on the number of community partners and the relationships we have with a variety of organizations! We enjoy hosting our families and others at several events. A few school partners and PAL events include:

MT FWP / Kiwanis / RMCU / Prickly Pear Land Trust / MT World Affairs Council / Friendship Center / PAL Thanksgiving / Senior Speeches **Graduation!**

We connect students to careers and internships during their high school experience, often with the same community partners. Students complete 15 hours in a field of their choosing. We hope to connect our students with a college or career immediately after high school!



**HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board of Trustees Meeting**

Meeting Date: 2/24/2026

Item V.A.1. - A.2.

Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Review of Agenda

General Public Comment

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Item for Action

Item for Information

Board/Superintendent Comments

Adjournment

Item Title: Consent Action Items
1. 1/27/26 Board of Trustees Work Session Meeting Minutes
2. Personnel Actions

Board Action	1st Motion	Second	Aye	Nay	Other
Hathhorn					
McKee					
Satre					
Murnane Butcher					
Cleatus					
Walsh					
Armstrong					
Meyer					



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 Work Session

Tuesday, January 27, 2026
5:00 p.m.
Lincoln Center

MINUTES

ATTENDEES

<i>Trustees</i>	<i>Others</i>
Jennifer McKee, Chair	Rex Weltz, Superintendent
Keith Meyer, Trustee	Kathy Kidder, CHS Assistant Principal
Kay Satre, Trustee	Sam Holman, Business Director
Jenny Murnane Butcher, Trustee	Brett Zanto, Capital High School Principal
Janet Armstrong, Trustee	Candice Delvaux, Executive Assistant
Linda Cleatus, Trustee	Josh McKay, Assistant Superintendent 6-12
Jennifer Walsh, Vice Chair	Taylor Lassiter, Communications Specialist
	Gary Myers, Director of Educational Technology
	Lona Carter, Student Health Services & Special Education Director
	Mick Morris, CHS Assistant Principal
	Kaitlyn Hess, Data & Federal Programs Director
	Todd Verrill, Facilities Director
	Justine Alberts, Assistant Superintendent PreK-5
	Several representatives from Slate, RTA, and Langlas

I. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Board Vice Chair Jennifer Walsh called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m., after which the Board recessed to tour Capital High School. At 5:45 p.m., Board Chair Jennifer McKee reconvened the meeting, and the Board participated in the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. REVIEW OF AGENDA

Board Chair Jennifer McKee reviewed the agenda with the Board of Trustees, and there were no changes.

The Board of Trustees then proceeded to hear general public comment.

III. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no general public comment.

IV. PRESENTATION

Principal Brett Zanto, Capital High School

Mr. Brett Zanto, Principal of Capital High School, provided a comprehensive overview of the school and reviewed the pamphlet included in the agenda.

2025-26 Demographics

- Total Enrollment: 1,343 (Jan. 13)
- Number of Faculty: 93
- Senior Class: 312
- Junior Class: 316
- Sophomore Class: 344
- Freshman Class: 371
- Free & reduced lunch: 20%
- Students with IEPs: 165
- Students with 504 plans: 106
- McKinney-Vento: 23

Bruin Highlights

- 2025 AA State Golf Champion
- 2025 AA State Boys Golf Team Runner-Up
- 2024 AA State Football Champions
- 2025 AA State Wrestling Champion and multiple top ten placers across weight classes
- 2025: 13 Montana University System Scholarships
- 2025: 23 STEM Scholarships received
- 2025: Multiple Presidential Award Finalists
- 2025: 2 National Merit Finalists
- 2026: 1 National Merit Finalist

Principal Zanto and Assistant Principal Kidder presented information on graduation rates from 2021 to 2025, ACT scores, the 2025–26 Action Plan, Cognia accreditation, AP/Honors/Dual Credit offerings, the Capital Code, MTSS, and the cell phone policy at Capital High School.

Principal Zanto and Assistant Principal Kidder responded to questions from the Board of Trustees regarding the information presented.

Principal Brett Zanto will retire at the end of this school year. The Superintendent and Board of Trustees expressed their sincere gratitude for his many years of service and dedication to students, staff, and the Helena School District.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Consent Action Items

1. 11/25/25 Board of Trustees Work Session Meeting Minutes
2. 12/19/25 Board of Trustees Special Board Meeting Minutes
3. FY 2025-26 Out-of-District Attendance Agreements (Out-of-District Students Attending Helena School District)

Board Chair Jennifer McKee commented, “At this point, I would entertain a motion to approve the *Consent Action Items* as presented.”

Motion: Trustee Kay Satre moved to approve the *Consent Action Items* as presented. Trustee Janet Armstrong seconded the motion.

Public Comment: None.

Vote: 6-0; motion carries unanimously. (*Note: Trustee Linda Cleatus was not in attendance for the vote.*)

B. Items for Action

1. **Consideration of the Approval of the Smith Partial Roof Replacement**

Mr. Todd Verrill, Facilities Director, presented action item 1, *Consideration of the Approval of the Smith Partial Roof Replacement*. Mr. Verrill requested the Board of Trustees award the 2026 Smith Elementary Partial Roof Replacement Project to Summit Roofing. This project will replace approximately 11,514 square feet of roof in one section. On December 17, 2025, the Facilities Office received bids from six qualified contractors, and Summit Roofing submitted the lowest proposal at \$192,815. Summit’s bid was \$59,495 lower than the next lowest bid. Summit Roofing has installed many roofs for the district over the past 20 years, and Mr. Verrill stated he is confident in their ability to successfully perform the work in accordance with the construction documents. They will complete this roof project in the summer of 2026 before the start of the 2026-27 school year. Mr. Verrill addressed questions from the Board of Trustees regarding the information presented.

Board Chair Jennifer McKee commented, “At this point, I would entertain a motion to approve action item 1, *Consideration of the Approval of the Smith Partial Roof Replacement*.”

Motion: Trustee Janet Armstrong moved to approve action item 1, *Consideration of the Approval of the Smith Partial Roof Replacement*. Trustee Keith Meyer seconded the motion.

Public Comment: None.

Vote: 6-0; motion carries unanimously. (*Note: Board Vice Chair Jennifer Walsh was not in attendance for the vote.*)

2. Consideration of the Approval of the Warren Partial Roof Replacement

Mr. Todd Verrill, Facilities Director, presented action item 2, *Consideration of the Approval of the Warren Partial Roof Replacement*. Mr. Verrill requested the Board of Trustees award the 2026 Warren Elementary Partial Roof Replacement Project to Summit Roofing. This project will replace approximately 10,560 square feet of roof in one section. On December 17, 2025, the facilities office received bids from six qualified contractors, and Summit Roofing submitted the lowest proposal at \$100,040. Summit's bid was \$29,492 lower than the next lowest bid. Summit Roofing will complete this roof project in the summer of 2026 before the start of the 2026-27 school year. Mr. Verrill addressed questions from the Board of Trustees regarding the information presented.

Board Chair Jennifer McKee commented, "At this point, I would entertain a motion to approve action item 2, *Consideration of the Approval of the Warren Partial Roof Replacement*."

Motion: Trustee Kay Satre moved to approve action item 2, *Consideration of the Approval of the Warren Partial Roof Replacement*. Trustee Jenny Murnane Butcher seconded the motion.

Public Comment: None.

Vote: 6-0; motion carries unanimously. (*Note: Board Vice Chair Jennifer Walsh was not in attendance for the vote.*)

That concluded the review of the Items for Action. The Board of Trustees moved on to final board or superintendent comments.

VI. BOARD OR SUPERINTENDENT COMMENTS

There were no further comments.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Board Chair Jennifer McKee adjourned the meeting at 7:02 p.m.

Candice Delvaux, Recording Secretary

PERSONNEL ACTIONS

February 11, 2026 – February 24, 2026

CERTIFIED PERSONNEL

Appointments

<u>Location/Assignment</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Offered Salary</u>	<u>Accepted Salary</u>	<u>Start Date</u>
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Terminations/Retirements

<u>Location/Assignment</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Reason</u>	<u>Effective</u>
SSC/Occupational Therapist	Machart, Sierra	Resignation	06/09/2026

Leaves

<u>Location/Assignment</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Term</u>	<u>Type of Leave</u>
Warren/Grade 5	Komac, Ashley	2026-2027 SY	LOAWOP
CRA/Mathematics	O'Leary, Kathleen	2026-2027 SY	LOAWOP

CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL

Appointments

<u>Location/Assignment</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Offered Salary</u>	<u>Accepted Salary</u>	<u>Start Date</u>
Kessler/Para Educator	Austill, Jenasee	\$19.03/hr.	\$19.03/hr.	02/17/2026
Rossiter/SACC Para Educator	David, Charlise	\$19.03/hr.	\$19.03/hr.	02/18/2026
Central/Para Educator	Luz Barragan Lopez, Ana	\$19.03/hr.	\$19.03/hr.	02/19/2026
Jim Darcy/Para Educator	Thomas, Leah	\$16.16/hr.	\$16.16/hr.	02/23/2026

Terminations/Retirements

<u>Location/Assignment</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Reason</u>	<u>Effective</u>
CHS/Para Educator	Malach, Catherine	Retirement	06/09/2026
Kessler/SACC Para Educator	Wiseman, Michelle	Resignation	02/09/2026

Leaves

Location/Assignment

Name

Term

Type of Leave

SUPPLEMENTARY CONTRACT ASSIGNMENT

<u>Name</u>	<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Salary</u>	<u>Start Date</u>	<u>End Date</u>	<u>Location</u>
Carter, Lee	TRAFFIC EDUCATION	\$7,623.00	2/2/2026	4/17/2026	
Christensen, Reid	TRAFFIC EDUCATION	\$5,643.00	2/2/2026	3/25/2026	
Mahana, Jeffrey	TRAFFIC EDUCATION	\$1,950.00	2/2/2026	4/10/2026	
McMahon, Richard	TRAFFIC EDUCATION	\$3,507.50	2/2/2026	4/15/2026	
Peterson, Nancy	TRAFFIC EDUCATION	\$3,538.00	2/2/2026	4/15/2026	
Scanlon, Martin	TRAFFIC EDUCATION	\$6,435.00	2/2/2026	4/17/2026	

**HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board of Trustees Meeting**

Item V.B.1.

Meeting Date: 2/24/2026

Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Review of Agenda

General Public Comment

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Adjournment

Item Title: Item for Action
1. Consideration of Authorization to Utilize Available Bond Premium and Interest Funds for Facility Parity Between Helena High School and Capital High School

Board Action	1st Motion	Second	Aye	Nay	Other
Hathhorn					
McKee					
Satre					
Murnane Butcher					
Cleatus					
Walsh					
Armstrong					
Meyer					



Helena
Public Schools
A great place to learn

MEMORANDUM

To: Helena School District Board of Trustees
From: Superintendent Rex Weltz
Date: February 20, 2026

Dear Helena School District Board of Trustees,

It is recommended that the Board of Trustees authorize the utilization of available bond premium and interest funds to ensure parity between the educational spaces at the new Helena High School and the renovated and expanded Capital High School.

Strategic use of these funds will allow the District to maximize the community's investment and further align our facilities with our commitment to providing comparable educational opportunities across both campuses.

Respectfully,

Superintendent,


Rex M. Weltz

**HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board of Trustees Meeting**

Meeting Date: 2/24/2026

Item V.C.1.

Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Review of Agenda

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Adjournment

Item Title: **Item for Information**
 1. Removal of Facilities Warehouses in Preparation for District Kitchen Construction

**HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board of Trustees Meeting**

Meeting Date: 2/24/2026

Item VI.

Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Review of Agenda

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Board/Superintendent Comments

Adjournment

Item Title: Board/Superintendent Comments

**HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Board of Trustees Meeting**

Item VII.

Meeting Date: 2/24/2026

Call To Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Review of Agenda

General Public Comment

Presentation

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Adjournment

Item Title: Adjournment