



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, February 3, 2026
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
Keith Meyer, Trustee	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
	Sam Holman, Business Director
	Justine Alberts, Assistant Superintendent
	Taylor Lassiter, Communications Specialist
	Gary Myers, Director of Educational Technology
	Siobhan Hathorn, Trustee Attending as a Guest of the Public
	Kaitlyn Hess, Data & Federal Programs Director

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 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 12.2.2025 POLICY COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Policy Committee reviewed and accepted the minutes from the December 2, 2025, Policy Committee meeting.

V. POLICIES FOR SECOND READING-HAVE GONE TO FULL BOARD FOR 1ST READING

A. 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 action.

B. 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 action.

C. 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 action.

D. 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 school districts and MHSA to prohibit participation of a home school student in extracurricular activities based upon the student either not being a U.S. 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 action.

E. 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 action.

F. 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 the 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 action.

G. 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 1 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 action.

VI. POLICIES FOR THIRD READING-HAVE GONE TO FULL BOARD FOR 1ST 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 unless at a public event. The Policy Committee determined that Policy 3097: Use of Video Monitoring Cameras would go before the full Board of Trustees for action.

B. 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 developed to align with House Bill 819 regarding the specific flags and banners that may be displayed on district or school property. Clarifying language was added to specify that the policy 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 would be brought before the full Board of Trustees for action.

VII. PRESENTATION OF POLICIES FOR FIRST READING

A. Policy 2020: Student and Family Privacy Rights

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed Policy 2020: Student and Family Privacy Rights. This policy is updated to reflect changes from House Bill 599 regarding parental rights law. Parents may opt their child out of any personal analysis, evaluation, survey or data collection that does not require personally identifiable information. Parents must opt in to any personal analysis, evaluation, survey or data collection that requires personally identifiable information, unless that information is essential for establishing a student's education record or for a demographic survey to validate an achievement test used to gain admission to a postsecondary institution. The Policy Committee determined that Policy 2020: Student and Family Privacy Rights would be brought before the full Board of Trustees for information.

B. Policy 3010: Entrance, Placement and Transfer

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed Policy 3010: Entrance, Placement and Transfer. This policy is updated to reflect House Bill 168, which permits districts to receive ANB funding for special education preschool students based upon aggregate hours of instruction. Additionally, students with disabilities may be eligible to continue enrollment until they reach twenty-two years of age, unless they have received a regular high school diploma. The Policy Committee determined that Policy 3010: Entrance, Placement and Transfer would be brought before the full Board of Trustees for information.

C. Policy 3141: Nonresident Student Enrollment

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed Policy 3141: Nonresident Student Enrollment. House Bill 250 changes the out-of-district attendance laws that went into effect July 1, 2025, and applies to attendance agreements. The Board of Trustees may deny enrollment of an out-of-district student if accepting the student(s) would negatively impact the quality of education for resident students because the maximum student contract hours for a teacher of the class or maximum class sizes under accreditation standards would be exceeded. Additionally, the Board of Trustees may deny enrollment of a nondisabled student who has been suspended in or out of school in any school the student previously enrolled in within the previous three years. The Policy Committee determined that Policy 3141: Nonresident Student Enrollment would be brought before the full Board of Trustees for information.

D. Policy 7057: Use of Automated External Defibrillation

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed Policy 7057: Use of Automated External Defibrillation. This policy is updated to reflect the components of the district's AED program and to reflect changes to maintaining AEDs in accordance with Senate Bill 86. Specifically, SB 86 changes the requirement for maintaining a written plan for AEDs to only a written notice of the location of the AED to the 911 service covering the area. The Policy Committee determined that Policy 7057: Use of Automated External Defibrillation would be brought before the full Board of Trustees for information.

E. Policy 8100: Transportation

The Policy Committee reviewed and discussed Policy 8100: Transportation. This policy has been updated to reflect legal references and be in compliance with House Bill 250 regarding transportation requirements for students with disabilities. The Policy Committee determined that Policy 8100: Transportation would be brought 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.