



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 Teaching and Learning Committee Meeting

Wednesday, March 11, 2026

11:30 a.m.

Lincoln Center & TEAMS

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE

Trustees: *Others:*

Jenny Murnane Butcher, Trustee

Siobhan Hathhorn, Trustee

Jennifer McKee, Trustee

Candice Delvaux, Executive Assistant

Taylor Lassiter, Communications Specialist

Jane Shawn, HEA President

Dr. Justine Alberts, Assistant

Superintendent PreK-5

Kaitlyn Hess, Assessment and Federal
Programs Director

Gary Myers, Director of Educational
Technology

Lona Carter, Student Health Services
& Special Education Director

Keri Mizell, Human Resources
Director

Dr. Michele Douglass, Math
Consultant

Guests of the Public

I. CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting was called to order at 11:32 a.m. by Trustee Jenny Murnane Butcher.

II. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no general public comment.

III. REVIEW OF AGENDA

No changes were requested to the agenda.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The committee reviewed and accepted the minutes from the January 14, 2026, Teaching and Learning Committee Meeting.

V. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/DISCUSSION

A. Midyear Data Review Through Analytics and Insights

Ms. Kaitlyn Hess, Assessment and Federal Programs Director, presented a midyear overview of student performance using winter benchmark data and introduced the district’s new Analytics and Insights data dashboard. Overall, district-wide data shows stable, on-track performance compared to previous years, with no significant declines. Strong growth was noted in early literacy, particularly in prekindergarten through first grade, with improvements attributed in part to the implementation of the UFLI phonics program, which some schools are using as a core instructional resource. Ms. Hess emphasized the importance of analyzing data at the school, grade, and student-group level to identify trends and adjust instruction midyear. The new dashboard integrates multiple data sources—including academic, attendance, and behavior data—to support more informed decision-making. Discussion also included the distinction between benchmark (predictive) data and end-of-year measures, as well as ongoing efforts to balance instructional focus between reading and math. Concerns regarding student testing fatigue were noted, particularly at the middle school level. The district plans to continue professional development in literacy practices, including writing instruction and strategies to improve reading comprehension through stronger foundational skills and instructional inputs. Ms. Hess addressed questions from the Teaching and Learning Committee regarding the information presented.

B. Math Work – Dr. Douglass

Dr. Justine Alberts, Assistant Superintendent PreK-5, introduced Dr. Michele Douglass, a math consultant who has supported the district for approximately five to six years. Dr. Douglass has been working with K–12 mathematics teams, including current support for high school teachers and collaboration across grade levels to strengthen alignment and instructional practices. Discussion included ongoing curriculum review and alignment efforts in both mathematics and English language arts. At the secondary level, teams are engaged in a multi-year revision process to align standards, evaluate instructional resources, and ensure coherence across grade levels. In mathematics, the district is currently reviewing curriculum options, with an emphasis on selecting resources that balance accessibility, visual learning, and continuity for students transitioning between grade levels. The committee also discussed the importance of teacher involvement in the selection process, the role of professional development, and budget considerations in curriculum adoption. Additionally, challenges related to progress monitoring at the secondary level and the need for consistent assessment practices were noted as part of the broader instructional improvement efforts.

VI. BOARD/SUPERINTENDENT COMMENTS

There were no further board or superintendent comments.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:37 p.m. by Trustee Jenny Murnane Butcher.