



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, April 22, 2026 – 12:00 PM

This meeting will occur at the Lincoln Center (1325 Poplar St., Helena, MT 59601) and via Microsoft Teams.

To participate remotely, please use this link on Microsoft Teams:

[Join the meeting now](#)

AGENDA

I. CALL TO ORDER / 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 OF MINUTES

Review of 3/11/26 Teaching & Learning Committee Meeting Minutes

V. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/DISCUSSION

- A. Plucker Report on Gifted Education
- B. Career and Technical Education Updates

VI. BOARD/SUPERINTENDENT COMMENTS

VII. ADJOURNMENT



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.



CTE UPDATE

APRIL 2026

FUTURE READY PAYMENTS

- LEVEL 1: 15 CREDITS (\$800)
- LEVEL 2: 30 CREDITS (\$1200)
- LEVEL 3: 60 CREDITS (\$1500)

HOW?

Work Based Learning

- Internships
- Job Shadows

DLI

- Pre-apprenticeships

Dual Enrollments

- Unbundling degrees for Certificates. This makes it easier for students to obtain something in the field that they are interested in.
- Partnership with Helena College to create 10 pathways in Level 1 that can lead to an associate's or career path.

PATHWAYS to CLUSTERS

NOTABLE CHANGES

We are transitioning from Career Pathways to Career Clusters.

Previously, there were 17 Pathways; now, we will have 33 Career Clusters.

These adjustments aim to create clearer definitions for each pathway.

Fine & Performing Arts are now CTE with teachers that have Class 4 license.

AP Classes can now be tied to Career Clusters.

There are now a set of Foundation Classes that will be the same across all Career Clusters

- 02154: Business Math
- 02157: Consumer Math
- 12053: Entrepreneurship
- 19262: Personal Finance or Consumer Economics
- 22101: Leadership

Middle School Classes can be counted towards a pathway if there is a teacher who has a Class 4 License.