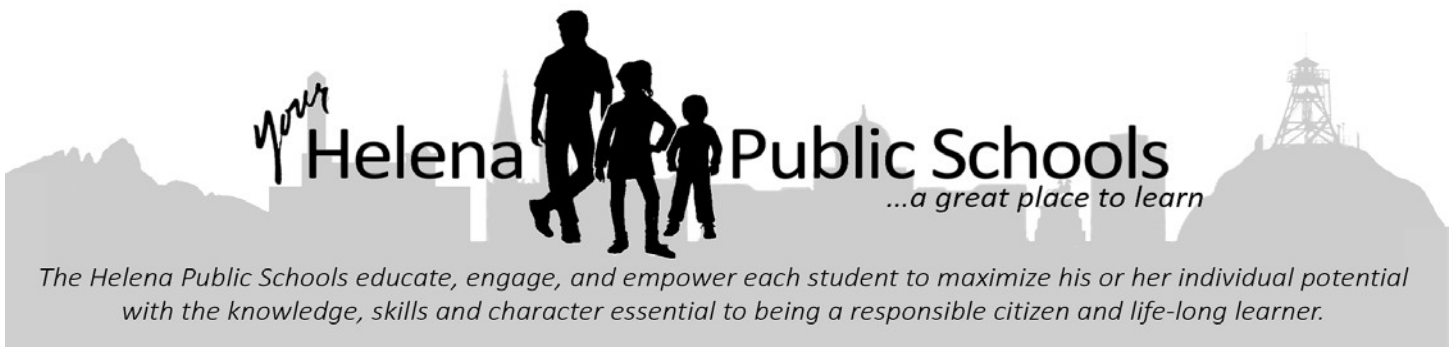




Health Benefits Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, August 27, 2026

3:45 p.m.

Lincoln Center & Teams

ATTENDANCE

Keri Mizell, Committee Member	Ross Gustafson, Committee Member
Candice Delvaux, Executive Assistant	Mike Bonville, Alliant
Jacquelyn Gomes, Bridged Health Alliance	Jessica Reynolds, Committee Member
Jane Shawn, Committee Member	Sarah Urban, Committee Member
Amber Ireland, Allegiance	Julie McGuire, Committee Member
Kim Barry, Committee Member	Mark McGuire, Committee Member
Jamie King, Allegiance	Sean Thatcher, Bridged Health Alliance
Emily Rodway, Committee Member	Severena Samuelson, Committee Member

Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 3:53 p.m. The committee welcomed representatives from Alliant, Allegiance, and Bridged Health Alliance, as well as new Health Benefits Committee members Sarah Urban and Severena Samuelson. Committee members and guests introduced themselves.

Committee Leadership and Subcommittees

The committee discussed the annual selection of the committee chair and vice chair, as well as member assignments to subcommittees. These items will be addressed at an upcoming meeting following review of the applicable sections of the Health Benefits Committee Handbook.

Appeals Subcommittee Update

An update was provided regarding an employee benefit appeal received during the summer. The committee discussed challenges associated with the federally required 30-day appeal timeline, particularly during the summer

months when it may be difficult to convene the committee. The appeal involved a medication prescribed for a minor that was FDA-approved for adults but not for minors. Due to confusion surrounding the initial authorization and payment of the claim, the Appeals Subcommittee reviewed the circumstances and determined how the appeal would be handled. The committee discussed the importance of retaining District involvement in unusual appeal situations, particularly when administrative errors or unique member circumstances are involved. Allegiance representatives clarified that the 30-day appeal timeframe is a federal requirement and cannot be extended. The committee noted that the Health Benefits Committee Handbook will need to be revised to ensure the District's appeal procedures align with applicable requirements. Bridged Health Alliance representatives reviewed the appeal process that will begin October 1. Allegiance will continue to handle first-level appeals. If a first-level appeal is denied, Bridged will conduct the initial review of the second-level appeal while continuing to involve the District in the review and evaluation process. The committee expressed a desire to maintain an appropriate level of involvement in second-level appeals because the plan is self-funded and involves member and District funds. Bridged will work with the District to further define the responsibilities and level of District involvement in the appeal process through the applicable agreement.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Renewal

The committee reviewed the upcoming renewal of the District's Employee Assistance Program (EAP). The proposed agreement is a three-year contract. It was reported that the membership count used for billing had been reduced after identifying individuals who had previously been counted more than once. The committee discussed the variety of EAP services available to employees and household members, including mental health counseling, legal and financial assistance, crisis support, workplace resources, and other daily-life assistance. Members discussed opportunities to improve employee awareness and utilization of these resources through ongoing communication, including potentially highlighting a different EAP benefit each month. The committee also discussed whether to continue providing six counseling sessions per occurrence or reduce the benefit to three sessions, particularly given the availability of behavioral health services through First Stop Health. Additional pricing information for the three-session and six-session options will be obtained and provided to committee members.

Motion: Jane Shawn moved to continue the Employee Assistance Program and determine the final pricing option after receiving additional information regarding the cost of three versus six counseling sessions. Jessica Reynolds seconded the motion.

Public Comment: None.

The motion passed 8-0.

COVID-19 Vaccinations at the Wellness Clinic

The committee discussed whether COVID-19 vaccinations should again be offered through the District's onsite wellness clinic for the 2026-27 school year. St. Peter's Health quoted a cost of \$125 per vaccination. During the previous year, 111 individuals received COVID-19 vaccinations through the wellness clinic, for a total cost of \$13,875. The committee compared the onsite cost with the estimated cost of receiving the vaccine through local pharmacies. Information reviewed during the meeting showed pharmacy prices varying by location, with an

average cost of approximately \$130. Based on the information available, the \$125 onsite wellness clinic cost appeared to be generally comparable to pharmacy pricing. Members discussed the added convenience of providing the vaccination onsite and the potential for that convenience to encourage participation.

Motion: Sarah Urban moved to include COVID-19 vaccinations as part of the 2026-27 onsite wellness clinic. Julie McGuire seconded the motion.

Public Comment: None.

The motion passed 8-0.

Musculoskeletal Program/Hinge Health

The committee discussed musculoskeletal (MSK) services and the District's current Hinge Health program. It was noted that the committee had previously voted to move forward with Hinge Health for the current plan year. Members discussed Hinge Health in comparison with other potential MSK programs and expressed interest in better understanding Hinge Health's services, utilization, costs, and overall value. The committee confirmed that the District will continue with Hinge Health for the current year and agreed to invite a Hinge Health representative to a future meeting to provide additional information and answer questions. Members may evaluate other MSK program options in the future as additional plan data become available.

Health Plan Financial Update

An update was provided on health plan performance through June 30. Total plan expenses were reported at approximately 104.4% of budget, representing an underwriting deficit of approximately \$400,000 through the first three quarters of the plan year. June's performance was more favorable, with an approximately 88% loss ratio. It was noted that continued favorable performance during the remaining months could improve the plan's year-end position. Additional historical cash inflows and rebate information are also being reviewed, and further information will be provided at a future meeting. The committee discussed the importance of educating members about available programs while also understanding how utilization affects plan costs. Some programs are provided at a fixed cost regardless of utilization, while others involve additional costs based on individual use. Members emphasized that appropriate use of preventive and early-intervention resources may help avoid more costly services later.

Health Benefits Committee Handbook

The committee discussed beginning a systematic review of the Health Benefits Committee Handbook. Members agreed that reviewing the handbook in smaller sections would allow for more meaningful discussion and ensure that outdated provisions are identified and updated. Discussion also focused on the current subcommittee structure. The committee noted differences between the subcommittees identified in the handbook and those currently used by the committee. Current subcommittees include Finance/Benefits, Wellness, Appeals, and Communications. Members discussed whether the existing structure continues to meet the committee's needs and

how responsibilities such as surveys, benefit research, and plan exploration should be assigned. For the next meeting, members will review the Member Responsibilities section of the handbook, including provisions related to committee leadership and subcommittees. The committee will use that review to help clarify the subcommittee structure and responsibilities before members select their assignments.

Future Benefit Plan Review

Bridged Health Alliance representatives discussed the anticipated timeline for evaluating future benefit plan design changes. The committee was encouraged to begin reviewing plan structure and potential changes in the fall, with more detailed discussions beginning around November or December once additional claims and utilization data are available. Potential areas for future consideration include whether the District should continue offering two medical plan options, consider a third option, modify existing plan designs, and survey employees regarding their priorities. The committee discussed the importance of educating employees about the current plans before conducting a survey so employees can provide informed feedback.

Open Enrollment Update

The committee discussed the ongoing open enrollment process and expressed appreciation for the support provided by Bridged Health Alliance representatives during onsite enrollment assistance. Positive feedback was shared regarding customer service and assistance provided to District employees. The committee also discussed whether printed open enrollment packets should continue to be mailed in future years. Mailing costs were approximately \$3,200 for employee packets, with additional costs associated with retiree packets. Members discussed several alternatives, including continuing printed packets for retirees, allowing employees to opt out of printed materials, using postcards with QR codes linking to electronic materials, and making printed copies available at District buildings. No action was taken, and members were asked to continue considering options for future open enrollment communications.

Next Meeting

The committee agreed to move the September Health Benefits Committee meeting from Thursday, September 24, to Wednesday, September 23, 2026, at 3:45 p.m.

The next meeting is anticipated to include:

- A presentation from Hinge Health;
- Review and discussion of the Member Responsibilities section of the Health Benefits Committee Handbook;
- Discussion of the committee's subcommittee structure and responsibilities; and
- As time permits, selection of the committee chair, vice chair, and subcommittee assignments.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:43 p.m.