

HELENA MIDDLE SCHOOL



Name: _____

Advisor: _____

Parent/Student Handbook 2026-2027

Office: 324-1000

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<https://hms.helenaschools.org/resources/student-handbook/>

Note: Policies and procedures may change during the school year. Changes will be noted on the district web site and in school newsletters. Changes in policy may supersede provisions found in this handbook. In case of conflict between Board Policy and any provisions in the student handbook, the provisions of Board Policy that were most recently adopted are to be followed. The District's Board Policies are available at: <http://helenaschools.org>

BEING **O**UR

BEST AT HMS

 **BE SAFE**



 **BE RESPONSIBLE**

 **BE RESPECTFUL**

 **BE A LEARNER**

HELENA MIDDLE SCHOOL

BOB'S Student Expectations for the HMS Community

	SCHOOLWIDE	CLASSROOM	HALLWAY	BOBCAT CAFÉ	OUTSIDE	AUDITORIUM	BATHROOM	CELL PHONE
BE SAFE	-Know and follow emergency procedures -Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself	-Know the evacuation routes and meeting places -Move appropriately in the classroom -Handle all classroom equipment and materials properly and carefully	-Walk -Keep to the right -Allow traffic to flow -Avoid physical contact	-Wait for permission to be dismissed -Raise hand to move around lunchroom -Pick a seat and stay	-Stay on campus -Avoid inappropriate physical contact and rough play	-Enter and exit the auditorium in an orderly way	-Wash hands with soap and water	-Travel the halls without headphones
BE RESPONSIBLE	-Make good choices -Be truthful -Own your behavior -Be a good role model -Follow through on your commitments -Report observed dangerous behavior to an adult	-Bring all your materials -Listen carefully and follow all directions -Complete and turn in all assignments on time -Complete make-up work	-Carry a hall pass when in the hall during class time -Get where you need to be in a timely manner -Keep our halls and your locker clean	-Clean up the area around you	-Consume food and drinks only in the BOBCAT CAFÉ -Return equipment in good condition	-Keep food, drinks and gum out of the auditorium -Sit in your designated area -Fold your chair seat up when leaving your aisle	-Follow sign-out procedures -Keep our bathrooms neat and clean	-Keep track of your personal device -Only use with permission or outside of school
BE RESPECTFUL	-Honor others' personal space and boundaries -Use appropriate language -Stop the spreading of rumors and gossip -Comply with adult requests	-Speak politely to your teachers and classmates -Allow others to speak without interruption -Cooperate and work well with others	-Monitor your voice level	-Make sure no one eats alone -Keep seats open	-Show tolerance for others' differences -Include others in activities	-Treat all speakers and performers with courtesy -Be quiet during presentations and performances	-Allow for the privacy of others	-Respectfully comply with teacher requests -Keep your texting, pictures, and video outside of school -Cell phones off and in your pocket
BE A LEARNER	-Recognize and appreciate the value of education	-Be on time and ready to learn -Give full effort -Stay on task -Participate -Ask for help if you need it	-Stay in grade level halls unless you are traveling to class	-Make healthy and nutritious food choices -Have green pass for any clubs	-Be active... get some exercise -Exit and enter the building quietly	-Listen to and learn from the presentation or performance	-Return to class promptly	-Use for educational purposes with permission

The MISSION of the Helena Middle School is to create a positive and safe learning environment that allows students to succeed by giving them opportunities to be their best.

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Vision

Helena Public Schools foster dynamic educational experiences that prepare all students for life.

Mission Statement

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.

This mission will be supported through the wise use of resources to meet students' needs, regardless of interests and talents. Students, families, educators and the community are committed to sharing the responsibility for creating a student-centered educational community that acknowledges learning as a life-long process.

Guiding Principles

- Each student enters school healthy and learns about and practices a healthy lifestyle.
- Each student learns in an intellectually challenging environment that is physically and emotionally safe for students and adults.
- Each student is actively engaged in learning and is connected to the school and broader community.
- Each student has access to personalized learning and to qualified, caring adults.
- Each graduate is prepared for success in college or further study and for employment in a global environment.

Board of Trustees

Determining, with the community, the major directions and purposes of public education is a responsibility of the local Board of Trustees assisted by the personnel of Helena School District No. 1.

Jennifer Walsh (Chair)
Janet Armstrong
Lisa Cordingley
Keller Higbee

Kay Satre (Vice-Chair)
Keith Meyer
Siobhan Hathhorn
Jenny Murnane-Butcher

Student Trustees:

Ella McCullough, CHS
Tyson Schulte, HHS

Helena Middle School

Mission Statement

The MISSION of the Helena Middle School is to create a positive and safe learning environment that allows students to succeed by giving them opportunities to be their best.

Vision Statement

The Helena Middle School community believes:

- All students can learn.
- All students can develop emotionally and socially.
- All students can learn to make positive choices and responsible decisions.
- In respecting and valuing diversity.
- In fostering lifelong learning.
- In parent and community involvement.
- Communication is vital for success.
- In positively addressing discipline and safety issues.

At Helena Middle School, the mission and vision statements guide policies and procedures. Therefore, we the staff of HMS will act in a responsible and professional manner to **Be Our Best** and meet the individual academic, emotional, behavioral, and social needs of all students.

Welcome to Helena Middle School

2026-2027



Dear HMS Families,

It is with great excitement and gratitude that I welcome you to a new school year at Helena Middle School. I am honored to join the HMS community as your new principal and look forward to partnering with students, staff, and families in the year ahead.

Helena Middle School is a place where everyone belongs. Our school community is grounded in four universal expectations:

- Be Safe
- Be Responsible
- Be Respectful
- Be a Learner

These values guide the work we do every day and help create a positive environment where students can grow academically, socially, and emotionally.

At HMS, students engage in a wide variety of learning experiences in a safe, supportive, and respectful setting. We take pride in being a strong community school where every student has opportunities to participate, contribute, and succeed. Families are essential partners in this work, and we value the collaboration between home and school in supporting student achievement.

The middle school years are an important stage in a student's development. During this time, students strengthen learning habits, decision-making skills, independence, and relationships that will help prepare them for high school and beyond. We are committed to helping every student feel connected, challenged, and supported throughout their middle school journey.

As we begin this school year together, please know that my door is always open. I value the input, involvement, and partnership of our students and families. I look forward to getting to know each of you and working together to make this a successful and memorable year for all.

Thank you for being part of the HMS community. Have a wonderful school year!

Sincerely,

Nick Radley
Principal
Helena Middle School

CHAPTER I

STUDENT RIGHTS/RESPONSIBILITIES

Helena School District No. 1 and the Board of Trustees have high academic expectations for all students. We are committed to providing all students with an excellent, well-rounded educational program. With this commitment in mind, we set forth the following:

All students are provided the opportunity to obtain a basic body of understandings, attitudes, knowledge, and skills needed for living in a democracy and the world community.

The opportunity for development of intellectual curiosity, critical thinking, problem-solving abilities, and aesthetic appreciation shall be provided.

Student rights and responsibilities provide a uniform standard of conduct that emphasizes the maintenance of an atmosphere where orderly learning is possible and encouraged. It defines student rights, student responsibilities, disciplinary procedures and actions to be taken. Students are individuals having a myriad of different personality characteristics, learning strengths, learning needs, emotional needs, and maturity levels. Students have the right to considerations because no one method or procedure for learning or discipline can be equally applicable to all.

A student has the right to contribute information that will be considered when decisions are made that affect the quality and content of their education. The District encourages all students to take responsibility for their education, including preparing for and participating in class and school activities, taking full advantage of learning services provided, helping design their educational goals, conducting themselves respectfully and appropriately.

A student is the center of the school and the purpose for which it is operated and maintained. Students, as humans, have the inherent right to be treated with dignity and respect. A student has the right to an education without disruption as provided by law and school board policies. Correspondingly, the student has a responsibility not to deny the right to an education to any other student.

A student shall not be excluded, expelled, limited or otherwise discriminated against in the terms, conditions, benefits or privileges of the District educational program or activity, because of race; creed; religion; gender; marital status; color; age; physical or mental disability; or national origin, unless based upon lawful grounds, including adopted policies of the Helena Board of Trustees.

A student may not be denied participation in District education programs or any sponsored activity except for such reasons as are provided in the adopted policies of this District; student code; federal, state and county associations or governmental entities; or organizations that sponsor activities, such as the Montana High School Association.

DEFINITIONS: The following definitions shall apply to the content of this document:

Student shall mean a person enrolled and admitted to the middle school of Helena School District No. 1 and as provided by state and federal law.

School authority shall mean any District teacher or certified personnel, administrator, or other adult District employee unless specifically stated otherwise.

BEING A SUCCESSFUL HMS MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT

Being a successful middle school student means taking responsibility for your learning, your choices, and the way you treat others.

Successful students come to school prepared, attend regularly, participate in class, complete their assignments, and ask for help when needed. It is important to set goals and work toward them even when something is challenging. Treating classmates, teachers, staff, and school property with respect, and making choices that contribute to a safe, welcoming school community are key to being successful at Helena Middle School.

Remember that mistakes are part of learning; what matters is learning from your mistakes, taking responsibility for them and continuing to try. Success in middle school is not just about earning good grades—it is also about developing confidence, good habits, resilience, and the skills you need to become an independent and responsible learner.

1. EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Equal educational and extracurricular opportunities shall be available for all students without regard to race, color, religion, creed, national origin, sex, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, ancestry, marital status, military status, citizenship status, culture, social origin or condition, political affiliation, mental, physical or sensory disability, or by any other distinguishing characteristic and other legally protected categories.

[See Board Policy: 3000 Equal Educational Opportunities](#)

2. SEXUAL HARASSMENT

A student has the right to attend and participate in school activities in an environment free from sexual harassment. Helena School District No. 1 does not tolerate sexual harassment in any form.

Sexual harassment:

All references to sex discrimination throughout these procedures include gender-based harassment and sexual harassment. Gender-based harassment may include acts of verbal, nonverbal, or physical aggression, intimidation, or hostility based on sex or sex-stereotyping, even if those acts do not involve conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment can occur whenever an individual makes sexual advances, requests sexual favors, and engages in other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual or sex-based nature, imposed on the basis of sex, that:

In the case of a student, denies or limits the provision of educational aid, benefits, services, or treatment; or that makes such conduct a condition of a student's academic status; or in the case of an employee denies or limits the employment, recruitment, consideration, or selection or treatment, or that makes such conduct a condition of the employee's employment status; OR

Has the purpose or effect of:

- substantially interfering with a student's educational environment or employee's work environment.;
- creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational or work environment;
- depriving a student of educational aid, benefits, services, or treatment; or depriving an employee of the benefits of or deprives that employee of employment opportunities; or
- making submission to or rejection of such conduct the basis for academic decisions affecting a student or employment decisions affecting an employee.

Sexual harassment is conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

1. Quid pro quo: An employee of the recipient conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the recipient on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct
2. Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the recipient's education program or activity;

or

3. "Sexual assault" as defined in 20 U.S.C. 1092(f)(6)(A)(v), "dating violence" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(10), "domestic violence" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(8), , or "stalking" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(30).

A determination of responsibility resulting from a formal complaint against a student for engaging in sexual harassment will result in appropriate disciplinary action, according to the nature of the offense. Complaints may be submitted via the District's Title IX Grievance Procedure. Please refer to [3005 Bullying, Intimidation, Harassment, Hazing Prevention and Reporting Policy](#) for additional information regarding the District's prohibition against discrimination and harassment.

Sexual harassment includes sexual violence. Sexual violence refers to physical sexual acts perpetrated against a person's will or where a person is incapable of giving consent due to the victim's use of drugs or alcohol or is unable to give consent due to an intellectual or other disability. Sexually violent acts include rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, and sexual coercion.

3. NON-DISCRIMINATION NOTICE

The Helena School District #1 strives to comply with all federal and state rules and regulations. The Helena Public Schools do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. This holds true for all students who are interested in participating in education programs and/or extracurricular school activities. Inquiries regarding compliance and/or grievance procedures may be directed to the school district's Title IX officer and/or Section 504/ADA Coordinators who have been designated to handle inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies:

Nick Radley, Principal
Title IX Building
Coordinator
ADA/Section 504
Building Coordinator
1025 N. Rodney
Helena, Montana 59601
406-324-1000

Inquiries may also be directed to the [U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights at this link.](#)

4. STUDENT EXPRESSION

Students enjoy the right of expression as provided by state and federal law. The student may not, by speech or conduct, materially disrupt class work or educational programs; or cause substantial disorder or invasion of the rights of others; or substantially interfere with the requirements of appropriate discipline, education programs or other activities in the operation of the school. The use of vulgar, offensive, lewd, or indecent speech or conduct is prohibited in the School District.

5. PERSONAL APPEARANCE

The students at HMS are proud of their individual appearance and the freedom to express themselves through the latest fashions. It is our goal to continue the tradition of our students presenting themselves in a positive manner. We ask that students are well groomed and demonstrate personal hygiene, exemplified by excellent manners and respect for each other. Your peers and teachers will appreciate your cooperative spirit and working together to present yourself by being your best. We respectfully request that you dress in a manner that does not disrupt the educational process of other students. To maintain high standards in health and safety for all our students, we request that all students focus on personal cleanliness and their overall personal appearance.

Students shall wear appropriate clothing that is not of a distractive nature and does not disrupt the learning environment of other students and staff. Overly revealing apparel shall not be worn to school. This includes undergarments that are worn as a main garment. Students should not wear clothing in a manner that is disruptive to the learning environment. Students who wear clothing that disrupts the learning environment at Helena Middle School may be sent home to change into appropriate school apparel.

- 🐾 Students shall not wear sunglasses, headphones, bandanas, hoods, earbuds, or earphones in school buildings before, during, or after normal school hours.
- 🐾 Students shall not wear clothing or jewelry that advertises/reference weapons, tobacco, alcohol, drugs, gangs or other harmful substances.
- 🐾 Students are prohibited from wearing any jewelry or other ornament that could cause personal harm to the student or another. Chains that are considered jewelry are not acceptable at HMS.
- 🐾 Students shall not wear articles of clothing that are adorned with weapons, alcohol, sexually suggestive slogans, profanity, lewd pictures, vulgar or obscene displays, or that which may be offensive to another's religion, race or national origin.

Students shall wear shoes or sandals to school and class. Footwear that is determined to be unsanitary or hazardous in the building may not be worn. Footwear that converts into rolling shoes is considered hazardous.

- 🐾 Students shall not wear costumes, such as ears, tails, flags, non-medical masks, etc.
- Students are prohibited from wearing trench coats, dusters or other long coats to or in school.
- Students shall not wear backpacks during the school day.
- Any hairstyle is permitted so long as it is kept neat, clean and controlled. Facial hair is permitted if it is kept neat and clean.

Repeated violations of these rules concerning student dress may result in a student being subjected to disciplinary action.

6. PHYSICAL EDUCATION ATTIRE

On days students have PE, students need to dress appropriately for physical activity, including non-marking gym shoes. The basic principle is that clothing selected by a student must not violate considerations of safety, restrictions of movement in required performance, and does not disrupt the learning environment.

7. CURRICULAR AND CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Directors of extra-curricular and co-curricular activities may establish additional standards of personal appearance, including dress and grooming requirements for such activities (e.g., concerts). Students participating in those extracurricular and co-curricular activities shall abide by those

standards.

8. STUDENT ASSEMBLIES

The staff at HMS believes school assemblies are excellent educational opportunities for students. While attending assemblies, we ask that students respect those performing, presenting, and entertaining the audience. Your cooperation in demonstrating excellent behavior is appreciated by all attending our assemblies.

During a school assembly students shall:

- Respectfully remain quiet and attentive during the entire program.
- Be courteous of other individual's rights and space during the program.
- Remain in their seats until a school authority has dismissed them.
- Refrain from whistling, talking or other acts of discourtesy that interrupts the performance.
- Remember BOBCAT BEHAVIORS...BE YOUR BEST!

Violation of these rules shall subject the student to the disciplinary code.

9. STUDENT, BUILDING AND LOCKER SEARCHES

For the safety and supervision of students in the absence of parents, to maintain discipline and order in schools, and to provide for the health, safety and welfare of students and staff, school authorities are authorized to conduct searches of students and their personal effects, as well as School District property. Such authorization includes, but is not limited to, the use of canines for searches of school property and personal property.

The District has a responsibility for the health and safety of its students during the school day, at all extra- curricular activities and events, and all activities conducted on school premises. Use or possession of drugs, alcohol, tobacco and tobacco innovations, controlled substances, medications (including over-the-counter medications without permission), any other illegal drug, and/or drug paraphernalia on school property pose a serious risk to health and safety to students, employees and visitors. Possession and use of weapons on school grounds poses an additional risk to the health and safety of students, employees, and visitors.

To protect students, employees, and visitors from these risks, it is necessary to conduct searches of persons and property under certain, limited circumstances. Such searches are necessary to: deter the presence and possession of prohibited substances and items; deter drug and alcohol abuse among the student population; to educate students as to the serious physical, mental and emotional harm caused by drug and alcohol abuse; to prevent injury, illness and harm as result of drug, alcohol abuse and/or weapons; to help identify student drug use and assist parents in pursuing evaluation and appropriate counseling; and to maintain a safe environment free of weapons, alcohol and drug use.

Searches may be carried out to recover stolen property, to detect illegal substances or weapons, or to mitigate or eliminate risks to and disruption of a safe and healthy educational environment. In keeping with these goals, the Board has authorized school authorities to conduct reasonable searches of school property and equipment, as well as of students and their personal effects, to maintain health, safety, and security in the schools.

District officials may conduct reasonable searches of school property and equipment, students and their

personal effects, and vehicles parked on District property to maintain health, safety, and security in the schools. The types of property that may be searched by school officials include but are not limited to lockers, desks, purses, backpacks, or vehicles parked on District property.

or other electronic communication devices may be confiscated but may not be searched without student or parent permission. If consent to search is denied, law enforcement will be contacted and they may seek a warrant allowing them to search the contents of the phone.

If consent is given and potential criminal conduct is discovered law enforcement will be contacted.

Students and Their Personal Effects

School authorities may search a student, the student's property, or District property under the student's control, when there is reasonable suspicion that the search will produce evidence, the student has violated or is violating either the law, Board policy, administrative regulation or the District's student conduct rules. Contractors may be employed by the District to handle trained dogs to assist in this search. Reasonable suspicion shall be based on the specific and objective facts that the search will produce evidence related to the alleged violation. The types of property that may be searched by school officials include but are not limited to; lockers, desks, purses, and backpacks.

Cell phones or other electronic communication devices may be confiscated but may not be searched without student or parent permission. If consent to search is denied law enforcement will be contacted and they may seek a warrant allowing them to search the contents of the phone.

If consent is given and potential criminal conduct is discovered law enforcement will be contacted.

Immediately following a search, a written report shall be made by the school authority who conducted the search. The report shall be submitted to the Principal and forwarded to the Superintendent. The parent of the student shall be notified of the search as soon as possible.

School Property

School property, including, but not limited to, desks and lockers, is owned and controlled by the District and may be searched by school authorities at any time. School authorities are authorized to conduct area-wide, general administrative inspections of school property without notice to or consent of the student and without reasonable suspicion.

Seizure of Property

If a search produces evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the District's policies or rules, such evidence may be seized and impounded by school authorities, and disciplinary action may be taken. When appropriate, such evidence may be transferred to law enforcement authorities.

Evidence produced by a search may be used in a disciplinary proceeding against the student.

[See: Board Policy 3040 – Searches and Seizures](#)

Reasonable Suspicion

Shall mean that there are reasonable factual grounds for suspecting that the search will turn up

evidence the student has violated or is violating local, state or federal law or rule of the District. Reasonable suspicion requires that independent facts exist and are articulated. Reasonable suspicion may be formed by considering factors which may include the following:

- a. Eyewitness observation by school personnel; and/or
- b. Information received from a reliable source; and/or
- c. Suspicious behavior by the student coupled with the student's past history and school record.

Personal, Locker, and Canine-Assisted Search Procedures

A student's person and/or personal effects (e.g. purse, book bag, etc.) may be searched when a school authority has reasonable suspicion to believe the student is in possession of illegal, unauthorized or contraband (stolen) items in violation of school rules or local, state or federal law.

Locker Searches

Student lockers, contents and secured personal property may be searched without prior notice given to the student when the school authority has reasonable suspicion that the locker contains illegal, unauthorized or contraband items or in case of an emergency requiring immediate access to the locker or other secured personal property.

Searches shall, whenever possible be conducted in the presence of an adult witness and the given student. School lockers are temporarily assigned to students. Lockers remain the property of the School District at all times. The District has a reasonable and valid interest in insuring that lockers are properly maintained for safety and health reasons.

Canine Assisted Searches

Trained canines accompanied by a trained handler may be used to assist the administration in a general search of the school or school grounds for the purpose of discovering illegal drugs or paraphernalia. No specific searches of students will be conducted by these means. General searches may take place in common areas as well as classrooms. Students will exit the classroom prior to any canine assisted search.

10. FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA) / NOTICE FOR DIRECTORY INFORMATION / PROTECTION OF PUPIL RIGHTS AMENDMENT (PPRA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records.

[See: Policy 3080 Maintenance of Student Records.](#)

These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day Helena Middle School receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

By law, both parents, whether married, separated, or divorced, have access to the records of a

student who is under 18. A parent whose rights have been legally terminated will be denied access to the records, if the school is given a copy of the court order terminating these rights.

The parent's or student's right of access to, and copies of, student records does not extend to all records. Materials that are not considered educational records, such as teachers' personal notes on a student that are shared only with a substitute teacher, records pertaining to former students of the District, and records maintained by school law enforcement officials for purposes other than school discipline do not have to be made available to the parents or student. Access will also not be granted to the parent or the student to confidential letters and recommendations concerning admission to a post-secondary educational institution, applications for employment, or receipt of an honor or award, if the student has waived his or her right of access after being advised of his or her right to obtain the names of all persons making such confidential letters or statements.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

Parents or eligible students who wish to ask Helena Middle School to amend a record should write the school principal clearly identifying the part of the record they want changed and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official includes a person employed by the school or school district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer, contractor, or consultant who, while not employed by the school, performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

4. Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer.
5. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged

failures by Helena Middle School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

Student Privacy Compliance Office

U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

Listed below are disclosures that elementary and secondary schools may make without consent:

FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from students' education records, without consent of the parent or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in 34 C.F.R. 99.31 of the FERPA regulations. Except for disclosures to school officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the parent or eligible student, §99.32 of the FERPA regulations requires the school to record the disclosure. Parents and eligible students have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosures. A school may disclose PII from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parents or the eligible student –

- To other school officials, including teachers, within the educational agency or institution whom the school has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that the conditions listed in §99.31(a)(1)(i)(B)(1) - (a)(1)(i)(B)(2) are met. (§99.31(a)(1))
- To officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of §99.34. (§99.31(a)(2))
- To authorized representatives of the U. S. Comptroller General, the U. S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the State educational agency in the parent or eligible student's State (SEA). Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of §99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf. (§§99.31(a)(3) and 99.35)
- In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid. (§99.31(a)(4))
- To State and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a State statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released, subject to §99.38. (§99.31(a)(5))

- The District may disclose student records or information to the youth court and law enforcement authorities, pertaining to violations of the Montana Youth Court Act or criminal laws by the student.
- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to: (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer student aid programs; or (c) improve instruction. (§99.31(a)(6))
- To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions. (§99.31(a)(7))
- To parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes. (§99.31(a)(8))
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena. (§99.31(a)(9))
- To caseworkers or other Child Protective Services representatives when DPHHS/CPS is legally responsible for the care and protection of the student. 20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(L).
- The District may disclose student records in a court proceeding where the parent is a party to an action involving child abuse or neglect or dependency matters without parental consent or notification if ordered to make this disclosure.
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to §99.36. (§99.31(a)(10))
- Information the school has designated as “directory information” under §99.37. (§99.31(a)(11))

Privacy Matters – Photographs and Social Media

Because of the prevalence of cell phones and social media, it has become almost impossible to fully protect the privacy rights of any individual from having his or her picture taken and shared with others. Parents have the right to annually opt out of having the District share their child’s photograph in publications or through District media events. The District will honor any parent opt-outs and not share this information. However, the District cannot prevent others who are present from sharing photos and videos from school events open to parents and/or the public, including music performances, sporting events, open assemblies, or field trips.

Notice for Directory Information

The *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act* (FERPA), a Federal law, requires that Helena Public Schools with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child’s education records. However, Helena Public Schools may disclose appropriately designated “directory information” without written consent, unless you have advised the District to the contrary in accordance with District procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the Helena Public Schools to include this type of information from your child’s education records in certain school publications. Examples include:

- A playbill, showing your student’s role in a drama production;
- The annual yearbook;

- Honor roll or other recognition lists;
- Student directories;
- Graduation programs; and
- Sports activity sheets, such as for wrestling, showing weight and height of team members.

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965* (ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with the following information - names, addresses and telephone listings – unless parents have advised the LEA that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent.¹

If you do not want the Helena Public Schools to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the District in writing by **the third Friday in November**. Helena Public Schools have designated the following information as directory information:

- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| • Student's name | • Address |
| • Telephone listing | • Electronic mail address |
| • Photograph | • Date of birth |
| • Dates of attendance | • Grade level |
| • Participation in officially recognized activities and sports | |

Notification of Rights Under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)

PPRA affords parents certain rights regarding our conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right to:

- *Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey") if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (ED)–*
 1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent;
 2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
 3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
 4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
 5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
 6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
 7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or
 8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.
- *Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of–*
 1. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
 2. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
 3. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained

from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.

- *Inspect, upon request and before administration or use –*
 1. Protected information surveys of students;
 2. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
 3. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

These rights transfer from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law.

Helena Public Schools have developed and adopted policies regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes.

Helena Middle School will directly notify parents via the District web site by posting student/family handbooks as well as any policy changes that occur during the school year. Helena Public Schools will also directly notify parents of students who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys noted below and will provide an opportunity for the parent to opt his or her child out of participation of the specific activity or survey. The school will make this notification to parents at the beginning of the school year if the District has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys listed below and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out of such activities and surveys. Parents will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys. Following is a list of the specific activities and surveys covered under this requirement:

- Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution.
- Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by ED.
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20202

[See: Board Policy 2020 Student and Family Privacy Rights](#)

Surveys

Parents have the right to inspect any survey or evaluation and refuse to allow their child to participate in such survey or evaluation that does not require the collection of personally identifiable information and is not necessary and essential for establishing the student's education record or validating an achievement test for admission to a postsecondary institution.

Parents have the right to opt their student in to a survey or data collection that requires the collection of

personally identifiable information and is not necessary and essential for establishing the student's education record or validating an achievement test for admission to a postsecondary institution.

10. RIGHTS TO EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES, TITLE IX, SECTION 504, AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

Equal Educational Opportunities

Equal educational and extracurricular opportunities shall be available for all students without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, religious beliefs, physical and mental disability, or actual or potential marital or parental status. The District will not knowingly enter into agreements with any entity or any individual that discriminates against students on the basis of sex or any other protected status. Any student may file a discrimination grievance by using the Uniform Complaint Procedure.

No student shall, on the basis of sex, be denied equal access to programs, activities, services, or benefits or be limited in the exercise of any right, privilege, advantage, or denied equal access to educational and extracurricular programs and activities. Any student may file a sex equity complaint by using the Uniform Complaint Procedure.

Inquiries regarding discrimination of any kind should be directed to the District's Title IX Coordinator, who shall provide information and, if necessary, direct the individual to the Uniform Complaint Procedure. The District will annually publish notice of these rights to students and parents.

Title IX Grievance Procedures

The Helena School District has adopted internal grievance procedures providing for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any action prohibited by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 Act (Title IX). Title IX prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs or activities operated by public school districts. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination. District does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its education programs and activities.

All references to sex discrimination throughout these procedures include gender-based harassment and sexual harassment. Gender-based harassment may include acts of verbal, nonverbal, or physical aggression, intimidation, or hostility based on sex or sex-stereotyping, even if those acts do not involve conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment can occur whenever an individual makes sexual advances, requests sexual favors, and engages in other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual or sex-based nature, imposed on the basis of sex, that:

In the case of a student, denies or limits the provision of educational aid, benefits, services, or treatment; or that makes such conduct a condition of a student's academic status; or in the case of an employee denies or limits the employment, recruitment, consideration, or selection or treatment, or that makes such conduct a condition of the employee's employment status; OR

Has the purpose or effect of:

- substantially interfering with a student's educational environment or employee's work environment;
- creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational or work environment;
- depriving a student of educational aid, benefits, services, or treatment; or depriving an employee of the benefits of or deprives that employee of employment opportunities; or

- 🐾 making submission to or rejection of such conduct the basis for academic decisions affecting a student or employment decisions affecting an employee.

Sexual harassment includes sexual violence. Sexual violence refers to physical sexual acts perpetrated against a person's will or where a person is incapable of giving consent due to the victim's use of drugs or alcohol or is unable to give consent due to an intellectual or other disability. Sexually violent acts include rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, and sexual coercion.

District Title IX Coordinator

Inquiries concerning the application of Title IX may be referred to the District's Title IX Coordinator:

Human Resources Administrator
1325 Poplar St.
Helena, MT 59601
406.324.2010

Inquiries may also be referred to the Office of Civil Rights, United States Department of Education.

Filing a Complaint

An individual believing that he or she has been the victim of sex discrimination should file a complaint with the Title IX Coordinator within 30 days of the incident(s) giving rise to the allegations. If the individual wishes to invoke the formal complaint procedures (see formal complaint procedures section), the complaint should be made in writing. An individual wishing to invoke the informal resolution process may make a complaint in writing or verbally.

An individual wishing to make a complaint will be provided with a copy of both the informal resolution procedure and the formal complaint procedures.

Section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

It is the intent of the district to ensure that students who are disabled within the definition of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are identified, evaluated, and provided with appropriate educational services.

For those students who need or are believed to need special instruction and/or related services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the District has established and implemented a system of procedural safeguards. Safeguards include a students' identification, evaluation, and educational placement.

This system includes notice, an opportunity for the student's parent or legal guardian to examine relevant records, an impartial hearing with opportunity for participation by the student's parent or legal guardian, and a review process.

School District No. 1 has appointed an officer to assist any employee, student, parent, or legal guardian with a Section 504/ADA concern. Inquiries concerning Section 504/ADA may be referred to the Central Administration Office, 55 South Rodney Street, Helena, Montana, 59601, or may be made by calling 1-406-324-2010.

Procedures have been established for addressing any questions or concerns and for resolving any conflicts relating to Title IX/Section 504/ ADA that may be raised by an employee, student, parent, or legal guardian in School District No. 1. A copy of those procedures may be obtained from

building Principals or the Central Administration Office.

[See: Board Policy 2050 – Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 \(Section 504\)](#)

11. HELENA MIDDLE SCHOOL ACADEMIC & BEHAVIOR INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

Academic Incentive Program

Helena Middle School supports a Grade Incentive Program designed to encourage and reward students for strong academic performance by offering incentives that match their personal interests. At the start of each term, students will work with school administrators to determine an incentive that is aligned with their interests whenever possible. This program helps students stay focused, take pride in their progress, and feel more connected to their learning. Families are encouraged to support their student's participation and celebrate their academic achievements.

Positive Behavior Program

The HMS Positive Behavior Program is designed to promote a safe, respectful, and supportive learning environment for all middle school students. The program encourages students to make positive choices by recognizing and rewarding behaviors that reflect our school's core values—such as responsibility, kindness, respect, and perseverance. Students may receive verbal praise, recognition, or tangible rewards for demonstrating these behaviors in the classroom, hallways, and other school settings. The goal is to build a school culture where positive actions are expected, noticed, and celebrated, helping all students grow both socially and academically.

12. STUDENT GRADE PHILOSOPHY

A	Excellent — Demonstrates outstanding achievement, strong understanding of the subject matter, and consistently high-quality work is completed on time.
B	Good — Demonstrates solid achievement and a good understanding of the subject matter, with only minor weaknesses or errors.
C	Satisfactory/Average — Meets the basic academic requirements and demonstrates an adequate understanding of the subject matter, though there may be noticeable areas for improvement. Student shows normal achievement.
D	Poor/Below Average — Demonstrates limited understanding or achievement. The student may meet minimum requirements but has significant weaknesses. Effort is also a consideration.
F	Failing — Does not meet the minimum academic requirements or demonstrate sufficient understanding of the subject matter. Work is unsatisfactory or was never completed.
WM	Withdrawal/Medical Withdrawal — Indicates that the student withdrew from the course for medical reasons. Written documentation from a doctor is required.
W	Withdrawal — Indicates that the student officially withdrew from the course after enrollment but before completing it. Generally does not represent a passing or failing grade.
NG	No Grade / Not Graded — Indicates that a final grade has not been assigned or reported, often temporarily pending additional information or completion of grading requirements.

13. HONOR ROLL

- All classes receiving letter grades are included.
- All classes that appear on a student's schedule will be included, with the exceptions of study skills and student assistant programs

- Courses will be weighted according to the number of class periods of instruction per week.
- A minimum grade point average of 3.50 is required for honor roll status.

Calculating the Grade Point Average

Letter Grade Point		
<u>Grade</u>		<u>Equivalent</u>
A	=	4
B	=	3
C	=	2
D	=	1
F	=	0

Semester Weight	
<u>Course Type</u>	<u>Factor</u>
English	1
Mathematics	1
Reading English	2
Science	1
Social Studies	1
Spanish	1
Semester Rotations	1

Note: Every other day rotations such as; Band, Chorus, etc. 0.5

Step 1: Determine the *grade point equivalent* for each class on schedule (from table upper left).

Step 2: Multiply *grade point equivalent* times the appropriate weight factor (from table upper right). Product is called *grade points*.

Step 3: Add all *grade points*. Add all *weight factors* for the quarter.

Step 4: Divide total *grade points* by total *weight factor*.

Carry answer out three (3) place = **grade point average**: 3.50 or **higher qualifies for school honor roll**.

SUMMARY: 1. (Class weight factor) x (grade point average) = grade points

2.
$$\frac{\text{Total grade points}}{\text{Total weight factors}} = \text{grade point average}$$

14. Academic Integrity

This section establishes clear guidelines regarding academic integrity, specifically addressing the use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools by students and plagiarism. It ensures that all academic work reflects original thought and learning, and that AI is used ethically and transparently. Engaging in dishonesty in academic work, including but not limited to plagiarism, cheating, unauthorized use of artificial intelligence (AI) or artificial generative intelligence (AGI) applications to complete schoolwork, submitting work generated by AI or AGI as original work, or any other form of academic dishonesty is a violation of the Code of Conduct.

❖ Definition of Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of presenting someone else's work, ideas, or expressions as one's own without proper acknowledgment. This includes:

- Copying text from sources (including AI-generated content) without citation

- Paraphrasing ideas without proper attribution
- Submitting work written by others, including peers or AI tools, as original

❖ **Use of AI Tools by Students**

- AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Grammarly, Quillbot, etc.) can support learning but must be used ethically. The following guidelines apply:

Permissible Use:

- Brainstorming ideas or generating prompts
- Improving grammar and syntax, with acknowledgment
- Practicing skills with oversight from educators

Prohibited Use:

- Submitting AI-generated content as original work without attribution
- Using AI to complete entire assignments or essays without **substantial** human contribution
- Using AI to circumvent the learning process (e.g., solving problems without understanding)

Required Disclosure:

- Students must clearly disclose any significant use of AI in their work.
- Example: “Portions of this assignment were generated with the help of ChatGPT and then revised for clarity and accuracy.”

Consequences for Misuse:

- 1st offense: Revision and resubmission of work
- 2nd offense: Revision and resubmission of work with a grade reduction
- 3rd offense: Disciplinary action for repeated or serious offenses. Possible loss of credit for the assignment.

This procedure was created with the assistance of AI, ChatGPT, 6.19.2025

15. CURRICULUM: HUMAN SEXUALITY OR IDENTITY INSTRUCTION

A parent, guardian, or other person who is responsible for the care of a student may refuse to allow the student to attend or may withdraw the students from human sexuality instruction. The withdrawal or refusal to attend is an excused absence. Human sexuality instruction is instruction that has the goal or purpose of studying, exploring, or informing students about intimate relationships, sexual anatomy, sexual reproduction, sexually transmitted infections, sexual acts, abstinence, contraception, or reproductive rights and responsibilities. These absences do not count toward the student’s discretionary 10-day total.

Written consent from the parent or legal guardian is required prior to any student attending identity instruction. Identity instruction is instruction that has the goal or purpose of studying, exploring, or informing students about gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation. A student is excused from not attending identity instruction unless the student’s parent/guardian provided written consent for the student to be in attendance prior to the instruction.

The District will provide parents/guardians with at least five (5) school days’ notice (but not more than 14 school days notice) before human sexuality or identity instruction is scheduled to occur.

[See Board Policy: 2016 Human Sexuality Instruction.](#)

16. CURRICULUM: USE OF SUPPLEMENTAL RESOURCES

A supplemental resource is an instructional material used to support, enrich, or reinforce the district’s core curriculum(s), state content standards, and learning objectives. These materials are not intended (and

should not) replace the adopted programs. Rather, these materials and resources are selected to help address diverse student needs, extend learning, offer additional practice, support the core program with missing skill support or learning, and promote equitable access to high-quality instruction.

Supplemental resources may be used to:

- Provide additional practice or review of key concepts,
- Offer enrichment opportunities for students working beyond grade-level expectations,
- Support targeted intervention for students requiring remediation or Tier 2/3 supports,
- Differentiate instruction based on learning styles, readiness, or language proficiency,
- Extend engagement through varied instructional formats (e.g., apps, texts, manipulatives, primary sources, etc.).

Examples may include leveled texts that a teacher wrote a DonorsChoose grant for, content-aligned digital platforms (e.g., Newsela, Prodigy, Kahoot), vocabulary tools or graphic organizers (e.g., Diffit), or videos supporting a specific lesson objective. All online subscriptions that interface with student information must comply with the Student Privacy Act.

[Board Policy 7065 Contracts with Third Parties Affecting Student Records](#)

When reviewing supplemental resources, educators are encouraged to use professional judgment and collaborate with colleagues or instructional coaches when choosing resources that meet the needs of their learners. Additionally, teachers must review the supplemental resource content in its entirety and consider the appropriateness of the resources and materials. Educators should ensure that supplemental resources:

- Align with the district's learning standards and curriculum goals,
- Support instructional equity by reflecting diverse perspectives, abilities, and cultural backgrounds,
- Are developmentally appropriate and accessible to all learners,
- Enhance, but do not replace, the core instructional materials,
- Promote student engagement, inquiry, and critical thinking.

To maintain alignment and consistency across classrooms and schools, the following approval process should be followed for supplemental resources not already reviewed or listed by the district:

- **Informal Use:** Teachers may use common, low-risk resources (e.g., articles, videos, practice tools) as long as they align with curriculum goals and are age-appropriate. These tools must be communicated in weekly agenda and course syllabi.
- **Site-Based Review:** For more substantial or ongoing resources (e.g., entire platforms, printed programs), educators should consult with building administrators. Supplemental resources are funded by the building or department, and must be approved by the building principal and Curriculum Director.
- **District Review:** Any resource that will be used across multiple classrooms or grade levels—or represents a significant instructional shift—should be submitted for review to principal. The principal will then set up a meeting with the Curriculum Director and include a representative team to discuss.

If in doubt, staff should seek guidance from building leadership or the Assistant Superintendent for 6-12+ to ensure materials meet district expectations and support a coherent instructional program.

17. WITHHOLDING OF GRADES, DIPLOMA OR TRANSCRIPT

Montana law (M.C.A. 20-5-201) allows a school district to withhold the grades, diploma, or transcripts of a pupil who is responsible for the cost of school materials or the loss or damage of school property until the pupil or the pupil's parent or guardian satisfies the obligation.

If a student transfers to another school district in the state the receiving district will be notified of any financial obligation of the pupil and will be requested to withhold the pupil's grades, diploma or transcripts until the obligation to the sending district is satisfied. Parents may challenge the underlying financial obligation using the District's Uniform Complaint Procedure.

18. ACADEMIC PLACEMENT OF TRANSFER STUDENTS

When a student transfers into Helena Middle School, their academic records will be carefully reviewed to determine appropriate placement in classes. This review helps ensure that each student is placed in courses that best match their academic level and learning needs. The school reserves the right to conduct additional assessments if necessary to support accurate placement and promote a successful transition. These assessments may include tests in core subjects such as math and reading. Our goal is to provide each student with the best possible educational experience from the start.

19. ACADEMIC ASSISTANCE PROCESS

Academic assistance may be available for all students through the after-school program. Participation in the program may be self-selected or by parent/staff referral based on a combination of the following factors.

- Poor grades
- High absenteeism
- Lack of homework completion
- Lack of resources outside the school setting

Students participating may sign up for the program with their core teachers or in the main office.

Sometimes despite our best efforts, students continue to experience academic failure. Students who need academic assistance will be monitored throughout the year. While research does not support retention at the middle school level, a process is necessary to keep parents informed of their child's performance.

- In keeping with District policy, students whose overall academic performance is below the 60% level will be identified and parents will be formally notified at the end of the second, third, and fourth quarters.
- Parents of students will be notified regarding high absenteeism.
- Counselors will:
 - ❖ Contact students considered at risk.
 - ❖ Facilitate team meetings to review student history, current performance, and possible options for support.
 - ❖ Contact parents.

20. REQUESTS FOR DAILY WORK

Helena Middle School will cooperate with students who are ill and wish to keep up on their schoolwork while at home. Homework can be accessed electronically per teacher direction. If worksheets or other materials are needed to complete assignments, the request can be made directly to the teacher via email

or phone.

21. ADVANCED NOTICE OF ABSENCE

If you know you will be absent ahead of time, bring a signed note from your parent or guardian to the main office. It is *the student's obligation* to check with the instructors at least two days before an absence for makeup work if the teacher has any work at that date. Assignments can also be accessed through PowerSchool. If teachers do not assign work to you before your absence, it is your responsibility to check with them upon your return to school for any additional work to be completed.

22. MAKE-UP PRIVILEGES

Contact your teachers at once about make-up work. A student with an *excused absence* will be given twice the number of days missed to make-up work assigned during the absence **up to a maximum of 4 days**. The teacher or building administrator may grant extensions.

Assignments or tests scheduled prior to the excused absence dates will be due upon the student's return. However, in cases of serious illness or family emergency, the teacher or building administrator may grant extensions.

In the case of an *unexcused absence*, the student is held accountable for the content of the work missed, but the make-up privilege is withdrawn, and no grades will be earned for that day.

23. EXTRA-CURRICULAR PRIVILEGES

Students **must attend a full day of classes in order to participate in after-school or evening school sponsored activities**. Exceptions may be granted by the building principal.

24. WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURES

Parental approval must be received before a withdrawal procedure is initiated. A student who is going to withdraw from school must then obtain a withdrawal form from the office. All textbooks will need to be turned in to his/her teachers. Chromebook and Chromebook charger need to be checked in at the office. Teachers will need to sign the withdrawal form, including the librarian and counselor. Before checking out of school, students will be responsible for paying fines for any missing materials.

25. EMERGENCY / SAFETY DRILLS

The Board recognizes that safety and health standards should be incorporated into all aspects of the operation of the District. Rules for safety and prevention of accidents will be posted in compliance with Montana Safety Culture Act and the Montana Occupational Safety and Health Act.

Each of the schools in the Helena School District has developed an emergency plan to help ensure the safety of children in the event of a fire or other disaster, such as an earthquake or a building intruder.

There will be at least eight (8) disaster drills a year. All teachers will discuss disaster drill procedures with their class at the beginning of each year and will have them posted in a conspicuous place next to the exit door. A record will be kept of all fire drills. The drills will be held at different hours of the day or evening to avoid distinction between drills and actual disasters.

In the event of actual emergency, up-to-date information may be obtained at the District web site: <http://www.helenaschools.org> or by tuning in or following the various information sites below:

- KXLH / KTVH / KFBB / KRTV
- MTPR & YPR
- KGR Radio
- Helena Independent Record
- The HPS District website at: <http://www.helenaschools.org> for weather alert and bus delay/cancellation information.
- HPS Transportation Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/HSD1Transportation/>
- Facebook: Helena Public Schools
- Instagram: Helena Public Schools

In compliance with state regulations, fire drills will be held throughout the school year. Specific instructions for the fire drill exits are posted in each room. An annual earthquake drill takes place in October of each school year.

[See: Board Policy 7060 School Safety](#)

26. COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES

Communication between the home and school is an essential part of any school program. You are encouraged to contact your child's teacher, principal or any specialist if you have questions, concerns, or compliments about your child's progress in school.

There are a number of ways for parents to receive information about their child's progress and school.

- **PowerSchool / Parent Portal** – Contact school administration for login and password information.
- **Open House** is a time set aside each fall for parents to visit their child's school and meet with teachers. Each teacher explains curriculum, grading practices, homework policies and general expectations. This is not a time for individual parent/teacher conferences.
- **Report Cards** are issued following each nine-week period. These reporting forms record academic progress and effort in each area of the curriculum.
- **Parent/Teacher Conferences** provide opportunities for teachers to share information with parents about their child's progress in school. The parent/teacher conference is an important means of reporting to parents and guardians. These conferences are scheduled in the fall and spring of the year. Additional conferences may be held at the request of the parent or teacher anytime during the year.
- **Newsletters** are emailed and posted on the school web site on a regular basis to provide timely information about the school, classroom and District activities
- **Parent Council Groups** (PTSO at HMS) are established in each school to provide valuable support and service to students and staff. Parents are encouraged to become active members.
- **School District Web Site** at <http://helenaschools.org> provides general information about the District and its programs, as well as current news items.
- **Superintendent's Parent Advisory Council** meets monthly at the Lincoln Center. Membership is comprised of a parent representative from each school. If you are interested in participating, please notify your child's building principal.
- **Assessment Results** also give parents an indication of how their child is progressing in school.

Students in Grades Three, Four, Five, Six, Seven, and Eight will participate in the State Assessment. Students in grades 5 and 8 will also participate in the State Science assessment. Test results assist teachers, principals and District administration in determining the effectiveness of instructional programs.

- **The District Calendar** will be distributed by the *Independent Record* in August. The calendar will contain the District's Report to the Community and will include student achievement results, program information, sports schedules and much more.

27. FOOD SERVICE & BOBCAT CAFÉ/SCHOOL MEAL CHANGES

School Breakfast and Lunch Programs

Helena Middle School uses an electronic system for the breakfast and lunch programs. Each student has a personal ID number. This ID number identifies the student's breakfast and lunch account. The students will be issued photo ID cards shortly after pictures are taken in the fall which will have the student's personal ID number as well as the picture and school name. This card can be used to purchase food in the cafeteria, and by using a student number/card all records of sales will be kept on file until they graduate. Cash is also an option but there will no record of what they eat or what they spent their money on.

Students are not allowed to use another student's ID card or student number. If a student loses their ID card, replacement cards are available in the main office at a cost of \$3. If a student is caught using someone else card or student number to purchase meals, this is classified as identity theft and the resource office will be contacted. This action is taken very seriously even if a friend willingly allows another friend the use of their personal number.

Students can add money to their meal account in the lunch line, but it is preferred that students do it through the main office before/after school or use the Mealtime pay on-line portal to help keep the lunch line moving at a quick pace. Their food service account can be used to purchase reimbursable meals as well as a la cart. Students who receive free or reduced services can purchase seconds at the full cost of the meal as an ala cart purchase. For inquiries regarding account balances, call the HMS office at 324-1000.

Meal Charges

Helena School District recognizes that students may forget or lose lunch money or may have an unpaid meal account balance. We endeavor to treat all students with dignity regarding unpaid meal charges; however, unpaid meal charges create a significant financial burden for the schooldistrict. To ensure that students do not go hungry but also minimize the financial burden, the district shall charge meals and collect on meal account charges in all schools consistent with this policy.

Students who are eligible to receive free meals may pre-pay for the purchase of any a la carte items with cash or check or use of the on-line Mealtime portal.

Parents may restrict their child's ability to charge by sending the school written notice either stating their child cannot charge, or they can limit the amount their child can charge. However, they will need to send a lunch with their child.

K-12 Students

Students will pay for meals at the full rate as established by the district in accordance with federal law. Eligible students will pay a reduced rate as established by the district in accordance with federal law. Meals must be pre- paid. Students will be permitted to charge a maximum of \$30.00 once his or her meal account reaches zero. Once a student has charged the maximum number of meals, the student will no longer be permitted to charge, and parents will initially be contacted directly by phone or in person by the building principal. The school will offer the student an emergency (regular) meal at the standard rate.

[See: Board Policy 7052 Meal Charges](#)

Payment of Meal Account

Each school shall maintain records regarding student meal balances. The district will send out notices to parents/guardians bi-weekly informing them of low or negative meal account balances. Parents/guardians may also check a student meal account balance online at mymealtime.com.

Parents/guardians must submit payment for meal accounts with a credit card or debit card at mymealtime.com OR pay in person with a check or cash at their student's school. Payment must be submitted 30 days from date of notice of deficit balance. If the District has not received payment within 30 days, the payment is considered overdue and is a delinquent debt.

[See: Board Policy 7052 Meal Charges](#)

For inquiries regarding account balances, call the HMS office at 324-1005.

The School Food Service Program is continuing the "Pay On-Line Program" for your student's food service account needs. You can go to the web site, www.mymealtime.com. You will need to set up an account, with the user as yourself (not the student). You will need to know your child(ren)'s student ID number. You will be able to use a credit card to put money into your child's accounts. All additional processing fees still apply at the time of the deposit, and the process will take about 48 hours to get into your child(ren)s account in each school.

The school breakfast and lunch prices for the 2026-2027 school year are as follows:

- Breakfast - Student - \$2.00
- Lunch - \$3.10 per lunch
- Milk - \$0.60 per half pint
- Adult Breakfast - \$3.50 per breakfast
- Adult Lunch - \$5.00 per lunch

To encourage a pleasant atmosphere, students are expected to be courteous and please:

- Deposit all lunch litter in wastebaskets.
- Return all trays and utensils to the dishwashing area.
- Leave tables and floors clean for those who follow.
- Take care of all new equipment and tables; there is no money to replace equipment that is vandalized.
- Move away from the building. This is to keep the noise down for classes in session.
- Do not return into the building and hallways until the lunch period is over. Remember other classes are in session and we need you to be quiet as you go to your classes.
- Do not play games that include tackling or piling on.
- Keep your feet and hands to yourself.
- Be courteous. Good citizenship is expected by students who use the Bobcat Café.

Middle schools operate on a closed campus policy. For safety reasons, students are not permitted to leave the school grounds to eat lunch. The only exception to this rule will be for those students accompanied by their own parent. In this case, students must check out and back in at the main office. **Students will not be permitted to leave school grounds during lunch if their parent or legal guardian is not present.** Students will only be excused for their lunch period.

Every parent/guardian may have (1) **FREE** lunch and a **FREE** breakfast, with their child(ren) each month during the school year. The School Food Service Program wants to encourage parents to be a part of their student's meals so they can experience the variety of nutritious options available every day to students at school. This offer does not include special events and is not valid on special days like BBQ days or Open Houses.

If you need assistance paying for your child's meal costs, now is the time to apply for the Free and Reduced Lunch program. Visit <https://helenaschools.org/departments/food-services/> to get started.

When you apply for meal assistance, you not only help your family, but you help your school receive more funding for important student services like textbooks and math and literacy programs.

If you're concerned about paying your child's meal costs, please apply. If you have questions, please contact your school office. By signing up, you feed your family and support your school.

28. DANCE REGULATIONS

- All school regulations apply at school-sponsored dances, including cellphones are off and in your pocket.
- Middle School dances begin directly following the school day. Students who leave the building after school may not return for the dance.
- Students serving ISS or OSS the day of the dance will not be admitted to the dance.
- All detentions must be completed prior to admittance to the dance.
- Students must attend all classes the day of the dance to be admitted to the dance.
- General rough housing while dancing is not permitted.
- If a student leaves the dance, they will not be allowed to return.
Doors will be closed 15 minutes after the dance begins.
- Students who are disruptive or demonstrate poor citizenship will be sent home.
- Students will not be allowed back in the main school building after the dance.

29. LATEX BALLOONS

Because of the potential for serious latex-related allergic reactions, as well as the choking hazards associated with latex balloons, only non-latex balloons will be allowed in the school building or on school grounds.

30. NUTRITIONAL BREAKS

Students may be allowed to have two nutrition breaks during the school day, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Students who elect to participate in the program will be allowed to eat a nutritional snack during the break time. Following is a list of nutritional snacks that are acceptable and unacceptable for students to eat during this time:

Acceptable Snacks	Unacceptable Snacks for the Classroom
Cheese, yogurt, pudding, water Breadsticks, bagels, muffins, pretzels, rice cakes Cereal/breakfast bars, granola bars Saltines, graham crackers	Pop/soda, coffee drinks, <u>ALL</u> energy drinks, fruit drinks, juice, milk Cookies, donuts, and desserts Candy, fruit roll-ups, gushers, etc. and chips

Fresh, canned or dried fruit Vegetables, Beef jerky, shelled seeds and nuts, trail mix Peanut butter	
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Helena Public Schools encourages the promotion of a positive learning environment by providing healthy snacks for celebrations. Each celebration should include healthy foods and beverage choices, including water. Physical activity during celebrations is encouraged.

[See: Board Policy 2120 Wellness](#)

31. ADDRESS/TELEPHONE/EMAIL CHANGES THROUGH POWERSCHOOL PARENT PORTAL

A change of address or telephone number during the school year must be reported to the office. In order to receive electronic communications from the office and teachers, please also report any changes in parent email addresses.

Parents may update their contact information by logging onto the PowerSchool Parent Portal and entering updated information.

32. AUTOMATED SYSTEMS NOTIFICATION OPT OUT

Parents and students can access student grades, assignments and attendance information at any time through the online PowerSchool portals. A username, password and directions will be provided to parents with students enrolled in grades 4-12. Parents should not share their password with their student. Students will receive their own username and password.

The Federal Communications Commission requires the Helena School District to allow you to opt out of receiving outreach messages to you via our automated system, BrightArrow. Outreach messages can include information about schedule changes, school events, parent reminders, cancelled activities, and other non-emergency messages.

The District wants to keep you informed in multiple ways. Our system allows us to send messages to you through different mediums – phone calls, texts, emails – regarding important school information. If you do not want to receive non-emergency messages from BrightArrow please copy and complete the form below and return it to your school office. You will still continue to receive emergency calls even if you do not consent. You can also revoke your consent to receive messages from our system at any time by contacting your child's school office.

Automated System Notifications Opt Out Form

Student Name: _____

Student's School: _____

Parent / Guardian Name: _____

(Please print)

Date: _____

I do not give the District and my child's school consent to send me
automated outreach messages through the District's notification system
I understand emergency messages are excluded from this opt out request.

33. TELEPHONE AND CELL PHONE/ ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES USE

Office Telephone

Students will not be allowed to use the phone during class periods, unless approved by a supervising adult. If a student chooses to use the phone between classes, they must ask permission. Students will not be given a late pass from the office. Telephone privileges should not be overused.

Cell Phones and Electronic Communication Devices

Students are permitted to possess cell phones, smart watches, or online communication devices either on their person or in their backpack. We ask that students turn off their phones as this sometimes distracts from the classroom experience. Our motto is "Cellphones are off and put away."

Any use requires permission from school personnel. Some examples of acceptable use include calculators, calendars for assignment input, and online educational access to curricular areas.

Students are permitted to use cell phones outside the building before school. After school students are permitted to use their cell phones so long as they are moving toward the exits. We ask students to refrain from using cell phones during lunch both inside and outside the building. Any other use requires specific permission from school personnel. **Texting, taking photos, or recording video inside or outside the school building during the school day is not allowed.**

Students may not wear earphones, earbuds, headphones or earpieces during the school day as they will impede the student's ability to hear instructions, announcements, or teacher requests.

Helena Public School District and individual schools are not responsible for cell phones, smart watches or other electronic communication devices that are stolen or damaged when confiscated or placed in a container for classroom management purposes.

Guidelines:

1. Students are permitted to use cell phones outside of the building before school.

2. Students are allowed to use cell phone after school in the hallway as long as they are on their way out of the building.
3. Texting, taking photos, or recording video inside or outside the school building during the school day is not allowed.
4. The School and/or District are not responsible for any student's lost or stolen cell phone.

Students not following the technology guidelines may be referred to administration for disciplinary action. Discipline procedures are as follows for violations:

1. Teachers will take the phone for the school day – students can pick the phone up from the teacher at the end of the school day.
2. If students refuse an adult request, the student will be referred to the office for Insubordination.
3. Habitual violation of technology use may result in additional consequences.

Students must comply anytime a request is made by school personnel to stop using a cell phone. If such a device is observed by staff, excluding use outside the building before and after school, the device shall be confiscated until released by an administrator. The administrator may release directly to the student or the student's parent or guardian.

An exception to this procedure may be granted by the school administrator for purposes relating to health and/or safety needs.

The school and/or District are not responsible for students lost or stolen cell phones.

GPS and Audio Child Tracking / Monitoring Systems

Parents and students are expressly prohibited from using covert means to listen-in or make a recording (audio or video) of any meeting or activity at school. This includes placing recording devices, or other devices with one- or two-way audio communication technology (i.e., technology that allows a person off-site to listen to live conversations and sounds taking place in the location where the device is located), within a student's book bag/backpack, on the student's person or otherwise in an area capable of listening in or recording without express **written** consent of the Superintendent.

34. FUNDRAISING PROJECTS

Any school related or outside organization or individual raising funds on school property or on behalf of a school, student activity or organization or individual, must conform to the rules and regulations of the Board/District as outlined below:

- A written plan for any fundraising activity must be presented to the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee. The activity will be permitted following approval of the plan by the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee.
- Fundraising must take place at such times and place as to not unreasonably interfere with the operation of the school
- The Helena School District tax identification number may be used only with permission of the District Business Office.
- All equipment and materials purchased by community groups and donated to school programs become the property of the Helena School District.
- The Business Office is responsible for financial administration or review of any funds

- gifted to a school, program or activity.
- Such gifts may be subject to state and federal law.

Any organization or individual using the Helena School District name, property or students to raise funds for non- district related causes must have approval from the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee. The Board/District assumes no responsibility for the finances of outside organizations.

See Board Policy: 7070 – School Related Fundraising and Individual or Outside Organizational Fundraising and

Board Policy 7080 District, School, Student Group Fundraising

Role of Students in School Sponsored Fundraising

At no time shall any student be required to participate in any school sponsored or school related fundraising activity.

Soliciting Funds

Business people and others are not to be solicited by school groups for funds, except after approval by the principals.

Soliciting Among Students

A written plan for any school sponsored fundraising activity involving students must be presented to the Superintendent's designee. This includes online fundraising activities. The activity will be permitted following approval of the plan by the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee.

Individual Student Fundraising Accounts

Accounts which track an individual student's fundraising will be accounted for by the extracurricular bookkeeper. Any unused balance in a student's individual account will revert back to the organization's (e.g. Band, Speech and Debate, etc.) main fundraising account. Student account balances may not be transferred to another student or sibling.

Crowdfunding or Online Fundraising

Any fundraising using an online site (e.g. GoFundMe, etc.) must be approved by the Superintendent or designee. Any funds raised through an online crowdfunding site must be mailed to the school NOT an individual person. All monetary donations must be recorded by the Business Manager.

Fundraising Goals

If a student exceeds a fundraising goal or only uses a portion of funds raised for a particular event the balance will revert to the club or organization's (e.g. Band, Speech and Debate, etc.) main fundraising account

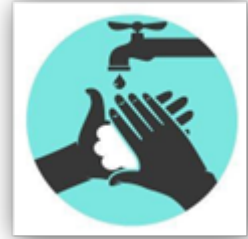
Advances or Loans Prior to Fundraising

At no time are students to seek loans or advances from any individual or organization with the promise of returning or paying back the loan from the club or organization's account.

35. **HEALTH SERVICES**

Communicable Diseases

The School Nurse assists school staff and families in the management of communicable disease. This is accomplished through classroom education including proper hand washing and respiratory hygiene, newsletter and in-service communications on health updates, and through the management of disease outbreaks in conjunction with local health department staff.



Per MCA 20-5-405 To protect children from contagious illnesses, students infected with certain diseases are not allowed to come to school while contagious. Parents of a student with a communicable or contagious disease should phone the school nurse or principal. Examples of diseases include Mumps, Measles, Chicken Pox (Varicella), Influenza, Pertussis (Whooping Cough), Coronavirus Disease (Covid)

For more information on MCA 20-5-405, please visit

https://www.leg.mt.gov/bills/mca/title_0200/chapter_0050/part_0040/section_0050/0200-0050-0040-0050.html

A team of registered, professional school nurses travel between schools as assigned. They are available to students, families and staff for questions, concerns, and information regarding health and safety in the school setting.

The Helena Public Schools Nurses request updated health information annually or anytime there are changes throughout the school year. A link to health forms and the school nurse contact information can be found [here](#).

Students who have health concerns during the day should tell their teacher(s) who may refer them to the school nurse/health office.

Illness Protocol

When a student becomes ill but does not require immediate medical help, a determination will be made about whether the student should be sent home (ie. should be temporarily excluded from school). The School Nurse or designated staff member will determine whether the student's illness meets one of the following criteria:

1. Prevents the student from participating comfortably in activities as determined by staff members of the school.
2. Results in a need for care that is greater than staff members can provide without compromising the health and safety of other students. This may include psychological or physical issues affecting academic performance.
3. Poses a risk of spreading disease to others based on the list of specific excludable conditions.
4. Temperature 100.4 or higher
5. Uncontrolled cough or difficulty breathing
6. Vomiting and/or repeated diarrhea
7. Severe headache, especially with fever

8. Red eyes with discolored discharge, and/or pain, and/or itchiness
9. Discolored nasal discharge, especially with fever
10. Severe ear pain
11. Rash accompanied by fever, drainage or blistering
12. Sore throat accompanied by fever, rash or difficulty swallowing

For a complete description of the Helena Public School Illness Protocol, please visit:
<https://helenaschools.org/illness-protocol/>

Immunizations

Vaccines Required for School Attendance, Preschool -12th Grade



VACCINE	PRESCHOOL ¹	KINDERGARTEN - 12 TH GRADE
Haemophilus influenza Type B (Hib)	1 dose (given on or after the 1 st birthday, unless child is older than 59 months) ²	None Needed
Diphtheria, Tetanus, and Pertussis (DTaP, Tdap)	4 doses	4 doses (one dose must be given on or after 4 th birthday) ^{3,4} Plus 1 dose of Tdap (prior to entering 7 th grade) ⁶
Polio (IPV or OPV)	3 doses	3 doses (one dose must be given on or after 4 th birthday) ³
Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (MMR)	1 dose (dose must be given on or after 1 st birthday)	2 doses (first dose must be given on or after 1 st birthday, and spacing between doses is 4 weeks)
Varicella "chickenpox" (Var)	1 dose (dose must be given on or after 1 st birthday) ⁶	2 doses (first dose must be given on or after 1 st birthday, spacing between doses is 12 weeks for children under 13 years, and 4 weeks for those older than 13 years) ^{5,6}

¹Per MCA 20-5-402, a preschool is defined as a facility that provides, on a regular basis and as its primary purpose, educational instruction designed for children 5 years of age or younger and that: (a) serves no child under 5 years of age for more than 3 hours a day; and (b) serves no child 5 years of age for more than 6 hours a day.

²Hib vaccine is not recommended for children older than 59 months.

³When following the ACIP schedule, children will have at least 5 doses of DTaP and 4 doses of polio vaccine.

⁴A pupil 7 years or older who has not completed the DTaP requirement must receive additional doses of Tdap vaccine or Td vaccine to become current in accordance with the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practice (ACIP) recommendations per ARM 37.114.705.

⁵While it is not recommended, if a child younger than 13 years receives their second dose of varicella at an interval of 4 weeks or longer, the dose does **not** need to be repeated.

⁶As of October 1, 2015 pupils are required to have varicella vaccine and all pupils 7th-12th grade must have a Tdap vaccine.

Note: A four-day grace period may apply, as appropriate, per the ACIP recommendations.

Documentation of a valid medical or religious exemption or conditional enrollment may be submitted in lieu of receiving all required vaccines.

Proof of school required vaccinations or exemptions must be provided before:

- Kindergarten entry
- 7th grade entry (Tdap booster given after the age of 10)

For more information regarding Montana required vaccines for school entry and exemptions allowed, please visit:

https://leg.mt.gov/bills/mca/title_0200/chapter_0050/part_0040/section_0030/0200-0050-0040-0030.html

Immunization Exemptions

Per Montana Code Annotated, parents can file for either a Medical exemption or a Religious exemption. A Medical Exemption is appropriate if a student's health care provider and parent agree that a required vaccination is not appropriate, based on the student's health. A Religious Exemption is appropriate if a vaccine is contrary to the family's religious beliefs. Links for both exemptions can be found below:

[Medical Exemption HES101A](#)

[Religious Exemption HES113](#)

For more information on the immunization exemptions allowed by Montana law, please visit : <https://helenaschools.org/departments/school-nurse-health-services/>

Medication Procedures

In special cases the school nurse, healthcare provider and parents may agree on a plan for administration of medication during school hours. The parent/guardian will bring the pharmacy labeled bottle of medication to school for intake including signature and counting of pills. Medication administration by family may be needed up to 24 hours after medication intake allowing time for a district school nurse to process the new medication.

Over-the-Counter Medications (OTC)

Pre K- 8th grade: A licensed health care provider must provide a written order for administration of OTC medication, parent authorization given, and medication provided in original container. Allow up to 24 hours before administration begins for school nurse processing.

9th grade -12th grade: may keep a small quantity of non-prescribed, parent recommended OTC medication with them and may self-administer, according to package directions. Parents who want the school to manage OTC medication for their high school student must complete an Authorization for Medication to be Given at School form and provide the medication.

Self-Administration of Emergency Medications

Students with permission by their health care provider and guardian who have provided the permission form to the school and who have asthma, severe allergies or anaphylaxis may possess and self-administer emergency medication; epinephrine auto-injector, epinephrine nasal spray, oral antihistamine, or asthma inhaler during the school day, during field trips, during school-sponsored events, or while on a school bus.

The written order and written authorization must be provided annually.

For more information on medication procedures, please visit: <https://helenaschools.org/medication-procedures/>

Allergies

The Helena School District makes every effort to decrease exposure to allergens, however **we encourage parents of children with life threatening allergies to contact the School Nurse prior to the beginning of the school year to work together to develop an Allergy Action Plan.** In case of suspected anaphylactic reaction, trained staff may administer stock emergency injectable epinephrine to any student in need thereof on school grounds according to a standing order of a chief medical officer for administration of emergency medications.

Head Lice

Head lice are wingless insects about the size of a sesame seed. They cannot fly, jump, or swim. They are passed from person to person from direct head-to-head contact or, very rarely, by “hitching a ride” on a comb, brush or hat. While they are an anxiety-producing nuisance they do not carry disease. Students with head lice or nits (louse eggs) will not be excluded from school as unnecessary absences directly affect school performance and a child’s opportunity to learn.

If a parent or staff member believes a student has lice, they can contact the School Nurse who will arrange a time to assess the student privately. If live lice or nits are found the student’s parents will

be contacted with information about effective treatment options. The student may remain at school until the end of the day.

Classroom wide screenings will not be done as studies indicate that it does not decrease the incidence of head lice, is disruptive to the learning process, and a violation of privacy and confidentiality of the student and their family.

Helena Public Schools nurses educate students regarding lice and how to avoid transmission by decreasing head-to-head contact and not sharing hats, combs, brushes or hair accessories. Parents can help by routinely inspecting their child's hair for lice. If you are unsure of this process, how to identify a louse, or how to treat an infestation please contact your School Nurse.

For a step-by-step guide for managing head lice at home, refer to:

<https://identify.us.com/idmybug/head-lice/head-lice-documents/lice-mgmt-chart-home.pdf>

Health Screenings

Methods for screening may include checklists, observations, and formal instruments as indicated. Parents are notified of any unusual performance or failed screening. Students may be referred for further evaluation by a health care provider.

Vision – School Nurses may screen students in grades K, 1, 3, 5, 8, and students new to Helena School District without screening documentation, students who are referred, and students who are being monitored.

Oral Health – Students in grades 1 and 3 may be screened by local dentists and dental health professionals who volunteer to provide a visual inspection. The School Nurse coordinates the program in each elementary school.

Hearing- School Nurses and School Speech/Language Pathologists may screen students for hearing in K, 1st and 9th grade. Students in other grades may be screened upon referral, if they are without screening documentation, and students who are being monitored. The regional Audiologist may consult with the school nurses regarding referrals and ongoing management.

36. SECURITY OF PERSONAL ITEMS

Students should mark instruments, coats, athletic shoes, and all personal belongings brought to school. It is most difficult to recover items that are not marked.

Helena School District No. 1 assumes no liability for personal loss. **It is recommended that you do not bring items of value to school.** If it is necessary to bring money or valuables items the item should be given to the school secretary for storage in the vault or should be stored in a locked locker. It is the responsibility of the student to claim such articles at the end of the school day. Do not bring skateboards or scooters to school for school personnel to store. These items should be left at home.

It is difficult to assure protection for articles from an entire gym class. Leave all valuable items at home or turn them into the office secretaries. The office maintains a lost and found department. You are urged to turn into the office all articles that have been found and to inquire there for anything you may be missing.

37. HOMELESS STUDENTS

In compliance with federal and state laws, the District is committed to supporting students experiencing

homelessness by ensuring full access to academic programming and other services for which they qualify. Homeless students will not be separated into distinct schools or programs based on their housing status, nor will they be identified or treated in a stigmatizing manner.

The District will determine school placement based on the best interest of the student. Whenever possible, students will remain in their school of origin, unless it is against the wishes of the parent or guardian. If remaining in the school of origin is not feasible, students will be enrolled in the local school serving the area where they are currently living, as would any other student residing in that zone.

For students who are unaccompanied by a parent or guardian, the District's homeless liaison will support enrollment and placement decisions, taking the student's preferences into account.

Homeless students will be enrolled immediately, even if they are unable to provide typical enrollment documents such as school records, immunization records, proof of residency, or other paperwork. Enrollment will not be delayed due to the lack of these documents.

Students experiencing homelessness will have access to the same services as their peers, including:

- Transportation to and from school
- Special education and related services (if eligible)
- Title I and other academic support programs
- English language development services
- Gifted and talented programs
- Career and technical education
- Pre-kindergarten programs
- Before- and after-school care programs
- School nutrition and meal programs

Homeless students have the right to transportation to and from their school of origin or the school they are currently attending, as determined by the District.

[See Board Policy: 3020 Education of Homeless Youth](#)

38. FOSTER CARE

Children in foster care have the right to educational stability and the same opportunities for academic success as their peers. "Foster care" refers to 24-hour substitute care provided to children placed outside their home by a child welfare agency, including placements such as foster family homes, group homes, residential facilities, emergency shelters, and pre-adoptive homes.

The District is committed to ensuring that students in foster care remain in their school of origin—defined as the school the child was attending at the time of placement—unless it is determined not to be in the child's best interest. If a change is necessary, the student will be immediately enrolled in the new school, even if required records are not available at the time of enrollment.

The District will work closely with the child welfare agency to make prompt best-interest decisions and coordinate transportation arrangements to support the child's continued education.

The foster care point of contact for Helena Public Schools is Kaitlyn Hess (khess1@helenaschools.org).

[See also Policy 3023 Education of Children in Foster Care](#)

39. LOCKERS & BACKPACKS

Students will be assigned a locker. Students are responsible bringing and maintaining a working lock on their locker with the current lock combination on record. Students must keep backpacks and bags used for carrying personal and school items in their assigned locker during the school day.

Lockers are the property of the School District and are subject to inspection by school officials.

40. BICYCLES

All bicycles must be parked in the bike, scooter and/or skateboard racks provided. They must be kept locked at all times. Bicycles should be ridden on the sidewalks and not on the lawn in front of the school or on the Lazy Green. School personnel may remove any bikes chained to gates, railings, etc.

41. TEXTBOOKS

District-approved textbooks are provided free of charge for student use, but students are responsible for returning them in the same condition as they were received. Books must be covered by the student, as directed by the teacher, and treated with care. A student who is issued a damaged book should report that fact to the teacher. Any student failing to return a book issued by the school in good condition is responsible for paying for damages or replacement costs according to the schedule below. Students who fail to pay for damage or loss of instructional materials lose the right to take textbooks out of the school until the payment is received. Students will be provided textbooks for use at school during the school day.

Students and parents/guardians with financial hardships who have debts resulting from lost or damaged portable equipment must make good faith and best efforts to pay the debts or make suitable equivalent restitution. When a student's parent/guardian has exhausted all possible efforts to pay the debt, the Principal, upon written approval of the Superintendent or his/her designee is authorized to forgive the debts upon reasonable written request of the parent/guardian.

- A. If instructional materials are damaged to the extent that they cannot be used, the student must pay the full cost of replacement.
 - a. New—1 or 2 years old new replacement cost
 - b. 3 years or older used replacement cost
- B. Book damage charges will be assessed according to the following:

The full replacement cost must be paid if the book is declared unusable. Damages rendering a book unusable include, but are not limited to:

- ❖ Torn out pages
- ❖ Obscene drawing
- ❖ Obscene writing
- ❖ Severe water damage.

Major damages—50% of replacement cost or cost of rebinding if applicable

- ❖ Broken cover
- ❖ Broken spine
- ❖ Limited water damage

Minor damages--\$1.00 per page (up to a maximum of \$10.00)

- ❖ Pen and pencil markings
- ❖ Folded pages
- ❖ Torn pages (pages and text are still present)

*Care will be taken in assessing minor damages so that allowances are made for normal wear and tear.

42. COUNSELING

Guidance services are available to every student. The goal of counseling is to help you make better decisions. Together you and your counselor discuss needs and feelings and explore alternatives. Your counselor can also provide you with information about jobs and careers as they relate to your interests and abilities. Counseling is confidential so don't be afraid to talk with your counselor. It is the professional responsibility of school counselors to fully respect the right to privacy of those with whom they enter counseling relationships. A counseling relationship requires an atmosphere of trust and confidence between the student and the counselor. A student has the right to privacy and to expect confidentiality. This confidentiality must not be abridged except where there is a perceived clear and present danger to the student and/or to other persons.

Please note: The school will notify the parent or guardian of the right to opt a student out of a mental health screening and will be notified of any issues or concerns resulting from a mental health screening.

43. SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

Helena Public School District #1 is committed to the rights of ALL children and to providing specially designed programming to meet their individual needs.

A child's educational future depends on active parent participation and commitment to this important educational process. It is important to take an active role to ensure that your child, if eligible, fully benefits from the many Special Education services available in Helena. If you are concerned with your child's progress in school, please contact the appropriate school staff and share your concerns. Refer to Procedural Safeguards in Special Education for students identified as having a disability under Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

<https://opi.mt.gov/Portals/182/Page%20Files/Special%20Education/Guides/ProceduralSafeguards.pdf?ver=2020-12-22-085315-637>

PreK -12th Grade Child Find

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires Helena Public School District #1 to have a practical method to locate, evaluate, and identify all children who have a disability and need special education and related services.

Child Find includes:

- Preschool transition from the IDEA Part C Early Intervention Program;
- Preschool screening activities that reach out to the community at large, including private and home schools, as well as local Head Start programs; and
- School-based pre-referral activities for school-age students (K – 12th grade).

Preschool Child Find Clinics, for children aged 3 to 5, are scheduled 4 times a year to identify, locate, and evaluate all children suspected of having a disability. Screening is by appointment only and can be

made by calling 324-2020.

Special Education K – 12th Grade Programming

Helena Public School District #1 offers a continuum of special education services in each of our elementary, middle and high schools for children who have been identified with a disability and are eligible for special education and related service under IDEA). If you are concerned with your child's progress in school, please contact the appropriate school staff and share your concerns.

Screening Services for Helena Students

Speech & Language - Kindergarten students may be screened for speech and language problems based on consultation between the educator and the speech language pathologist.

Vision & Hearing – PreK – 12th Grade students may be screened for vision & hearing concerns based on consultation between the educator, school nurse and/or speech language pathologist (hearing).

Academic - Students K - 12 will be screened through the referral process for any academic difficulties.

Methods of screening may include checklists, observations, and formal instruments. Parents will be notified of any unusual performance and recommendations will be offered for further evaluation.

For further information contact the Special Education Office at 324-1200.

44. SCHOOL INSURANCE — IMPORTANT MESSAGE TO PARENTS

Our school **does not** purchase medical/hospital insurance coverage for students. However, you can enroll your child in a low-cost group accident insurance program being offered in cooperation with the school. Even if you already have insurance, this plan may help you pay some of the doctor, dental, or hospital bills that your own insurance doesn't cover; such as doctor's office calls, therapy, and dental treatment. If your child has not brought an information packet home, please call our school office.

45. FIELD STUDIES

Your child's class will be participating in educational trips during the year. It is the policy of Helena School District No. 1 to acquire parental permission before allowing a student to travel with members of his/her class. If you would like your child to participate, please carefully read and sign the Parent Permission form. **By signing and checking the yes or no, you are giving permission for your child to go with his/her class on field trips during the year.** The district will provide transportation. If travel by a private car is required for an event, you will be notified prior to the trip.

As a parent or guardian, your signature on the permission form indicates that you understand that the school and the staff will do everything possible to prevent any accidents. However, by checking and signing, you indicate that you understand that some activities on field trips involve inherent risks to students regardless of all feasible safety measures that may be taken by the district. In consideration of the District's agreement to allow your child to participate in field trips you agree to accept responsibility for any loss, damage, or injury to your child that occurs during your child's participation in a field trip that is not the result of fraud, willful injury to a person or property or the willful or negligent violation of a law by a trustee, employee or agent of the Helena School District No. 1.

In the event it becomes necessary for the District staff in charge to obtain emergency care for your child, neither he/she or the School District assumes financial liability for the expenses incurred because of an accident, injury, illness and/or unforeseen circumstance.

If your child has a medical condition that the school should be aware of before allowing your child to participate on a field trip you will notify the school and inform them of the nature of the medical condition.

In the event that unforeseen circumstances arise creating a need for you to contact your student or to have information relayed to you about an emergency, change in itinerary, etc. contact the office and the office will contact a responsible adult attending the field trip.

46. STUDENT OUT-OF-STATE AND OUT-OF-COUNTRY TRAVEL

The building principal in consultation with the Superintendent must approve any out-of-state or out-of-country travel.

Students who participate in school-sponsored out-of-state or out-of-country travel must have parental / legal guardian permission and provide a completed and signed copy of the “Parent Permission for Out of State or Out of Country Travel”. They must also acknowledge in writing the following:

1. ***Nature of trip.*** A description of and acknowledgment/consent by parents and students regarding the nature of the trip and general travel plans, i.e., a brief factual account of the planned trip.
2. ***Inherent risks.*** Acknowledgment/Consent by parents and students that there are inherent risks in traveling to such a location.
3. ***Conduct rules.*** Acknowledgment/Consent by parents and students of the rules that will apply on this trip. You need to identify the rules that will apply on the trip, (i.e., if school rules will apply, that should be stated). Any additional rules should be noted.
4. ***Needed Accommodations.*** A parent or student must identify any needed accommodations before embarking.
5. ***Medical/Health Insurance.*** Students must have their own medical/health insurance. Parents must provide documentation of medical/health insurance before the trip.
6. ***Trip Insurance.*** Parents / guardians must secure “trip insurance” for international travel and in some cases out- of-state travel if it is not included as part of the total cost of the trip. If trip insurance is not purchased and a student purchases a ticket but does not travel, refunds or credits for unused airline tickets will be based on what the airline allows.
7. ***Medical Procedures.*** The student and parent should authorize the school chaperones to arrange for and, if necessary, to consent to treatment or medical procedures for the student at the parents’ expense. (Release form provided.)
8. ***Student Responsibility.*** Students and parents should acknowledge in writing the student’s responsibility for his/her own actions. Consequences for not following rules (e.g. leaving the group without permission) should be clearly outlined. (Release form will be provided.).
9. ***Release and Indemnification.*** The parent and student must release the school district and its agents from all actions not the result of fraud, willful injury or willful or negligent violation of law by an employee. This the standard set by state law.

For more information:

[See: Board Policy 2075 Field Trips](#)

47. COURSE FEES

A student may be charged a fee for consumable supplies or maintenance and repair of equipment that is used in classes and/or courses offered for graduation credit including but not limited to career and technical education and fine arts classes. Students may also be charged a fee for field trips or facility rentals associated with classroom or school activities either within or out of the district boundaries.

If a student is to be charged a fee, both the student and parent shall be notified regarding the amount of the fee or charge. A student may be charged reasonable tuition for activities not offered for graduation credit or for repeat courses offered for credit. These include adult education courses, drivers' education, athletics, intramural sports, extracurricular activities, and under three-mile transportation charges.

District students who apply and are approved for either free or reduced lunches may request a waiver of applicable tuition/fees. A current school lunch application must be on file with the appropriate school in order for this waiver to be granted. Absent extenuating circumstances, only one waiver will be granted per student for drivers' education.

See: [Board Policy 3075 Student Charges, Fines and Fees](#)

48. MIDDLE SCHOOL ACTIVITIES PROGRAM

During the school year the Helena Public Schools will provide an activities program and encourage all students to participate. HMS's activity program takes place after school on Mondays - Thursdays. Coaches/sponsors will offer programs that emphasize the active involvement of all students. Student participants are encouraged to take part in practices and/or rehearsals prior to participating in games and/or any performances.

A student attending a nonpublic school or home school that meets the requirements under MCA 20-5-109 may participate in extracurricular activities offered by the Helena Public Schools subject to the student's eligibility as set out in the Student Activities Handbook. The student's academic eligibility must be verified by the head administrator of the nonpublic school or educator providing the student instruction in the home school as verified by the HPS school principal. Any nonpublic or home school student seeking to participate in an extracurricular activity shall be required to provide proof of identity and residence in the same form as a student enrolling in an HPS school in order to establish residency. Parental permission must also be obtained before the student can participate in any extracurricular activities.

Specific details related to events, fees, fee waivers, schedules, and other pertinent information will be made available to students and their families prior to the event.

2026-2027	
Extra-Curricular Intramural Sports Schedule	
	Approx dates*
Cross Country (boys & girls)	Sept. 9-Oct 15
8th Grade Girls Volleyball	Sept. 9-Oct.15
Wrestling (boys & girls)	Oct. 20-Nov. 19
6th and 7th Grade Girls Basketball	Oct. 20-Nov. 19
6th and 7th Grade Boys Basketball	Dec. 1-Jan. 21
8th Grade Boys and Girls Basketball	Jan. 26-Mar. 4
6th And 7th Grade Girls Volleyball	Mar. 9-Apr. 22
Track	Apr. 27-May 27

HMS Co-Curricular Clubs

CLUB	ADVISOR Student Leader	MEETING DATE	TIME	ROOM
Aviation Club	Friez	Tuesdays	Advisor	Library
Birders Club	Grotbo	Thursdays	Lunch	122
BookWorms	Friez/Linder	Tuesdays	Lunch	Library
Cheer Club	Hall	Tuesdays	Afterschool	Auditorium
Chess Club (6th)	Friez	Wednesdays	Lunch	Library
Chess Club(7th/8th)	Sebastian	Thursdays	Lunch/recess	128
Coloring Club (7th/8th)	Glueckert	Mondays	Lunch	219
Dungeon & Dragons(6th/7th/8th)	Osborne	Tuesdays (9/12)	3-4pm	205
Goo Goo Club	Ziegler	Wednesdays (SPRING ONLY)	Advisor	Outside
Icons of the Realm Club	Zepeda	Wednesdays	Lunch	126
Lego Club	Friez	Thursdays	Lunch recess	Library
Magic Gathering Club	Chandler	Tues/Thurs	Lunch	106
Math Counts (6th/7th/8th)	Ehli/Roberts	Wed (Mid-Oct)	2:50-4	215
Mine Craft	Friez	Fridays	Advisor	Library
Montana Rockies Study Group	Blaz	Fridays	Lunch	220
Newsletter Club	Friez	Thursdays	Advisor	Library
Ping Pong	Hogan/Goebel	Fridays	Advisor	Gym
Poetry	Friez	Thursdays	Lunch	Library
Puzzle Club (7th/8th)	Ziegler	Mon/Fridays	Lunch	104
Robotics	Friez	Thursdays	Advisor	Library
Running Club	Bishop	Tues/Thurs (spring)	3-4 pm	Outside
Science Olympiad (7th & 8th)	Grotbo	Wednesdays	Lunch	122
Skills USA (8th)	Cejka	Wednesdays	Lunch	Tech
SLAC	Friez	Wednesdays	Advisor	Library
Sonic the Hedgehog	Ziegler	Thursdays	Advisor	104
Student Council (All grades)	Fuhrman	Tuesdays	Advisor	228
Volunteer Community Club	Zepeda	Thursdays	Lunch	126

*Students wishing to participate in co-curricular activities must be enrolled in the Helena Public Schools. Extracurricular activities are open to enrolled students, homeschool students and private school students.

Parent/guardian permission is required for a child to participate in a school club and/or extracurricular activity (Appendix E). Parents also have the right to withdraw their child from any club or extracurricular activity.

Please note: Student clubs and performing groups such as the band, choir, and drill and athletic teams may establish standards of behavior — including consequences for misbehavior — that are stricter than those for students in general. If a violation is also a violation of school rules, the consequences specified by the administrator will apply in addition to any consequences specified by the organization.

A student attending a nonpublic school or home school that meets the requirements under MCA § 20-5-109 may participate in extracurricular activities offered by Helena School District subject to the student's eligibility as set out in **the *Student Activities Handbook***. The student's academic eligibility must be verified by the head administrator of the nonpublic school or educator providing the student instruction in the home school as verified by the principal. Parental permission must be obtained for the student to participate in the

extracurricular activity.

49. ALTERNATIVE ASSIGNMENTS

The Board recognizes the right of an individual parent or guardian to request that his or her child not read a given book, utilize specific curriculum materials, or view a particular media work. Therefore, procedures for requesting an alternative assignment for an adopted curriculum assignment must be followed and can be obtained from the building administrator.

50. BOOK CHALLENGE

The Board of Trustees, although it is ultimately responsible for all instructional and library material, recognizes the right of students to have free access to many different types of books and resources. The Board also recognizes the right of teachers, librarians and administrators to select books and other materials in accordance with the adopted curriculum, current trends in education, and student and staff needs, and to make them available in schools and libraries.

Therefore, books and other resources will be chosen for value of interest and enlightenment of all students in the school community. A book or other resource will not be excluded because of the race, nationality, political, or religious values of the writer or of the material's style and language. Every effort will be made to provide materials that present all points of view concerning the international, national, and local problems and issues of our times. Books and other resources of sound factual authority will not be proscribed or removed from library shelves or classrooms because of partisan doctrinal approval or disapproval.

Censorship of books and other materials will be challenged in order to maintain the school's responsibility to provide information and enlightenment. Accordingly, the Board will deal with censorship of books or other materials as follows:

- The final decision on controversial materials rests with the Board after the established process for handling challenged materials has been exhausted/completed.
- The Board recognizes the right of an individual parent or guardian to request that his or her child not have to read a given book, or view a particular media work.
- Any parent or person of legal standing who wishes to request reconsideration of the use of any book or resource in the school must make such request in writing on forms provided through building principals or school librarians.

Administrative Procedure for the enforcement of this [Board Policy 2067 Handling Challenges or Questioned Materials](#) may be obtained in the Central Administration building, and each school office.

51. PEAK GIFTED & TALENTED PROGRAM

The Helena Public Schools PEAK Program provides a continuum of comprehensive services for identified gifted and talented (GT) students in grades PreK–12. Rooted in research-based practices, the program is designed to meet the unique academic and social-emotional needs of high-ability learners through enrichment, acceleration, and specialized instruction.

Gifted learners are identified through a multi-faceted assessment process that considers quantitative and qualitative data and reviews a body of evidence to fully understand each individual learner. The identification model aligns with state and national guidelines to

ensure equitable opportunities for all student populations.

PEAK services include a combination of pull-out, push-in and consultative models. In all settings, students and caregivers can explore options for academic acceleration, which is available through a structured referral team process. These models incorporate the voice and choice of students and their caregivers.

- Middle school PEAK programming (grades 6-8) serves students in their home school. Students are challenged to investigate, problem-solve, collaborate, and engage in self-directing learning. Students also engage in seminars and symposiums to enhance their communication skills.

Recognizing the essential role families play in the development of gifted learners, PEAK engages parents in ways to learn about giftedness and best support their gifted learning, PTO partnership with events, and through collaboration with school teams to support student's academic and emotional needs.

52. FAMILY NIGHT

The Helena Board of Trustees has designated each Wednesday evening during the school year as Family Night.

The purpose of this evening is to allow students the opportunity to participate in family or community-based youth activities without scheduled conflicts from schools. In order to promote the concept, the Board requires that there be no school-sponsored activities on Wednesday night that last beyond 7 p.m.

53. PARENT AND STUDENT PORTALS

Parents and students can access student grades, assignments and attendance information at any time through the online PowerSchool portals. A username, password and directions will be provided to parents with students enrolled in grades 4-12. Parents should not share their password with their student. Students will receive their own username and password.

54. MULTILINGUISTIC LEARNERS

Helena Public Schools is federally required to support students who are English Learners by providing language instruction services. The District ensures parents have opportunities to meet with school staff, stay involved in their child's education, and support their child's English language development. Whenever possible, information is shared in a language and format families can understand.

As part of the registration process, all families complete a Home Language Survey to help identify students who may qualify for English language development services. If a language other than English is indicated, the District administers the WIDA Screener to determine the student's English proficiency level within 30 days of enrollment. Based on the results, students who qualify for services are identified as English Learners (ELs). Parents are notified of these results. This notification will include the reasons for identification, the child's English proficiency level and how it was determined, the instructional methods used in the program, how the program will support language development and academic success, and the expected timeline for reaching English proficiency.

All identified EL students participate annually in the ACCESS for ELLs assessment to monitor progress in listening, speaking, reading, and writing in English. Parents are notified of results as soon as they become available.

Parents seeking more information about the District's identification of and programs for students with limited English proficiency should contact the Kaitlyn Hess (khess1@helenaschools.org).

55. MAKEUP SCHOOL DAYS DUE TO AN EMERGENCY

In emergencies, including during reasonable efforts of the trustees to make up aggregate hours of instruction lost during a declaration of emergency by the trustees under Section 20-9-806, MCA, pupil instruction may be conducted on a Saturday when it is approved by the trustees.

Pupil instruction may be held on a Saturday at the discretion of a school district for the purpose of providing additional pupil instruction beyond the minimum aggregate hours of instruction required in Section 20-1-301, MCA, provided student attendance is voluntary.

[See: Board Policy 2005 School Year – Calendar- and- Day](#)

56. CHILDREN OF MILITARY FAMILIES

It is the intention of the District to remove barriers to educational success imposed on children of military families transitioning to and from school because of frequent moves and/ deployment of a parent on active duty in the regular Armed Forces, National Guard, or Reserves.

In the event that a child of a military family seeks to enroll in the District, the District shall enroll and appropriately place the student as quickly as possible based upon information in the unofficial educational records pending receipt of the official records.

The District shall not charge tuition in relation to a child of a military family transferring into the District who has been placed in the care of a noncustodial parent or other person through a special power of attorney so long as that noncustodial parent or other person resides within the District

[See: Board Policy 3022 Children of Military Families](#)

CHAPTER II: STUDENT CONDUCT CODES

1. BOARD OF TRUSTEES STATEMENT OF INTENT

Declaration of Student Responsibility and Conduct Codes have been developed so that students, parents, teachers and administrators will understand that firm, fair and consistent discipline policies are maintained. The Board of Trustees has approved this Declaration of Student Responsibilities and Code of Conduct with the intent to:

- Ensure a stable learning environment that encourages academic excellence.
- Ensure that rules are equitable and just while complying with state and federal law.
- Ensure that as students' progress in school and advance in age and maturity, they will assume greater responsibility and accountability for their decisions.
- Encourage students, parents, teachers, administrators and community members to work together in an atmosphere of respect, cooperation and courtesy to ensure effective

educational programs.

Students must recognize responsibilities and abide by the rules and policies of the Helena Public Schools and Federal and State Law.

Students who violate local, state or federal laws may be referred to law enforcement.

2. STUDENT DISCIPLINE / STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Students are expected to conduct themselves within the bounds set by the Board and the administrative regulations set forth by the Superintendent. Consideration for the rights and wellbeing of others, cooperation with all members of the school community and respect for oneself and others are the basic principles guiding student behavior.

The primary responsibility for student discipline within the school rests with the principal. The primary responsibility for the maintenance of discipline within the classroom lies with the individual classroom teacher. Corporal punishment shall not be used. Corporal punishment does not include reasonable force as needed to maintain safety for students, staff, or other persons, or for the purpose of self-defense or defense of property.

Disciplinary action may be taken against any student in violation of the Student Code of Conduct. Disciplinary action may range from conferring with a teacher to expulsion from school. Continued infractions will have a cumulative effect in terms of disciplinary action.

These grounds stated below for disciplinary action apply whenever a student's conduct is reasonably related to school or school activities, including, but not limited to the circumstances set forth below:

- On, or within sight of, school grounds before, during, or after school hours or at any other time when school is being used by a school group;
- Off school grounds at a school-sponsored activity or event or any activity or event that bears a reasonable relationship to school;
- Travel to and from school or a school activity, function, or event;
- Anywhere if conduct may reasonably be considered to be a threat or an attempted intimidation of a staff member, an interference with school purposes or an educational function, a threat to the safety and welfare of the student population or conduct that detrimentally effects the climate or efficient operations of the school.

A student is in violation of the Student Code of Conduct if the student engages in any inappropriate behavior, including but not limited to:

- Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling tobacco, vapor products, or marijuana products (tobacco includes, but is not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, snuff, smoking tobacco, smokeless tobacco, alternative nicotine product, or any other tobacco or nicotine innovation; marijuana products include but are not limited to edible products, ointments, tinctures, marijuana derivatives, marijuana concentrates, and marijuana intended for use by smoking or vaping);
- Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling alcoholic beverages.

- Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling marijuana (including medical marijuana).
- Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling illegal drugs or controlled substances, look-alike drugs, and drug paraphernalia.
- Using, possessing, controlling, or transferring a weapon in violation of the “Possession of a Weapon in a School Building” section of this policy.
- Using, possessing, controlling, or transferring any object that reasonably could be considered or used as a weapon.
- Disobeying directives from staff or disobeying rules governing student conduct.
- Using violence, force, coercion, intimidation or other comparable conduct toward anyone or urging other students to engage in such conduct except when physical force is determined to be reasonable and necessary and used as self-defense or the defense of another person after an investigation into such conduct.
- Causing or attempting to cause damage to, or stealing or attempting to steal, school property or another person’s property.
- Engaging in any activity that constitutes an interference with school purposes or an educational function or any other disruptive activity.
- Unexcused absenteeism.
- Misconduct of any sort on any means of District transportation.
- Bullying, hazing, harassment (including sexual harassment), or intimidation, including cyberbullying.
- Forging any signature or making any false entry or attempting to authorize any document used or intended to be used in connection with the operation of a school.

[See: Board Policy 3050 Student Discipline](#)

3. **CONSIDERATION OF MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES**

School authority shall consider all aggravating or mitigating circumstances prior to dispensing disciplinary action.

Aggravating and mitigating circumstances include, but are not limited to:

- Seriousness of the offense.
- Program placement.
- Attitude and age of the student.
- Pattern of conduct.
- Degree of cooperation.
- Other educational relevant circumstance.

DEFINITIONS: The following definitions shall apply to the Code of Conduct:

Detention shall mean a student is required to serve from 2:50 - 3:25 p.m. on a Tuesday or Thursday in an assigned room. *If you are a bus student, it is your responsibility to make arrangements with your parents for a ride home.* Detention will take priority over all after-school activities. Failure to serve a detention will result in detention time doubling, in-school suspension, restorative justice or out-of-school

suspension. Students must serve the detention on the day for which it is assigned. Students are required to follow detention rules.

After School Detention Rules:

1. After school detention begins promptly at 2:50 p.m. If you choose to be late for detention, you will not be admitted to detention. In that case, it will be treated as a no-show for detention, which will result in your time doubling or other disciplinary action.
2. Detention ends at 3:25 p.m. Please make sure that you have made transportation arrangements prior to the day of your detention.
3. You are responsible for bringing work to detention. Acceptable things to do during detention are homework or read a book. The book can be a textbook, a library book or a paperback of your own. Reading material must be appropriate. Magazines are not allowed.
4. An unsuccessful detention due to unacceptable behavior will result in your detention time doubling or other disciplinary action.
5. It is your responsibility to remember where after school detention is being held.

Disciplinary reassignment shall mean disciplinary action that may include transfer of the student to another room, program or alternative placement for a specified time.

Expulsion shall mean the removal of a student from the classroom and school attendance in Helena School District No. 1 by action of the School Board of Trustees. All privileges to participate in any co-curricular or extracurricular activity in the Helena Public Schools are revoked when the Board of Trustees directs expulsion.

[See: Board Policy 3055 Student Due Process Rights](#)

Suspension shall mean the removal of a student from a regular class or school attendance and the loss of privileges to participate in any co-curricular or extra-curricular activity for the duration of the suspension and more specifically defined by Helena School [Board Policy 3055 Student Due Process Rights](#). Students are not allowed on school district property during out-of-school suspensions.

Suspension may occur in any of the following forms:

In-school intervention shall mean the student remains in school at a restricted, designated location for a designated period of time. School assignments will be provided for the student. Credit will be given for a day served in in-school suspension, if assignments are completed and returned to the teacher.

During in-school suspension a student *shall*:

1. Refrain from talking, sleeping or being disruptive.
2. Secure permission before leaving their assigned seat.
3. Complete work assigned by school authority.
4. Refrain from use of food products, candy, gum, etc.
5. Refrain from use of non-approved tech & toys.

Any infraction of rules of in-school suspension shall result in out-of-school suspension.

Out-of-school suspension shall mean the involuntary removal of a student from school attendance for up to (10) ten school days or less per infraction or incident. The administrator shall determine the length of an out-of-school suspension. Parent(s) or legal guardian(s) or persons with parental authority will be notified of an out-of-school suspension before the student leaves school. An explanation of the reasons for

such action will be made at that time, both to the student and the parent(s), legal guardian(s) or person with parental authority. A parent/student/administrator conference is required prior to the student readmission to the school.

Corrective Disciplinary Action shall mean school authority must administer the defined disciplinary action, provided in the student code, as a result of the violation(s) of the student code(s).

Minimum corrective action shall mean the school authority must administer at least the specified corrective action provided for each code violation.

Maximum corrective action shall mean the school authority may not exceed the degree of disciplinary action provided for in the code of the specific code violation.

School authority may administer such corrective disciplinary action between the **minimum** and **maximum** after consideration of mitigating and aggravating circumstances provided. The degree of the severity (from the least to the most severe) of corrective disciplinary action is described as follows:

- Teacher-student conference
- Administrator-teacher-parent-student conference
- Reassignment
- Counseling program
- Detention
- Restorative justice
- Student contract
- Alternative education setting
- In-school suspension (including loss of privileges to participate in extracurricular and co-curricular activities)
- Out-of-school suspension (including loss of privileges to participate in extracurricular and co-curricular activities)
- Police notification/criminal process referral
- Expulsion

SUSPENSION PROCEDURE

The following procedure rules apply to a student charged with a violation for which maximum disciplinary action is in- school or out-of-school suspension:

1. The principal/assistant principal or the principal's designee shall have the authority to suspend a student.
2. Prior to suspension, the student shall be informed of the charges.
3. Except in the case of an emergency, the student will be allowed to respond to the allegations before the administrator issues a decision regarding the suspension.
4. The assistant principal or designee shall inform the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of the student's suspension prior to the student being released from school.

EXPULSION PROCEDURE

The following procedural rules shall apply to a student charged with a violation whose maximum disciplinary action imposed is expulsion. The building principal may recommend the expulsion of a student to the District Superintendent.

The principal shall provide the District Superintendent, parent, legal guardian, or person with parental authority, written notification that will include the following:

1. The alleged violation(s) committed by the student.

2. Facts and circumstances setting forth the misconduct upon which the recommendation is based and other information.
3. Recommendation of whether the student should be granted credit for work completed in the present semester.
4. Recommended length of expulsion.

Upon completion of the principal's written recommendation, the District Superintendent or his/her designee shall conduct a meeting to determine whether the student shall be reinstated into the Helena Public Schools, if requested by the parent, legal guardian, or person with parental authority. If the student is not reinstated after the meeting with the principal and the District Superintendent or designee, the Superintendent or designee shall notify the student and parent, legal guardian, or person with parental authority, in writing.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES HEARING

Only the Board may expel a student from school. After the administration has investigated the alleged misconduct, and made the decision to recommend an expulsion of the student to the Board, a Board Meeting shall be scheduled, and the administration shall send a written notice to the student and the parent outlining the following:

- the intent to recommend an expulsion;
- the specific charges against the student;
- what rule or regulation was broken;
- the nature of the evidence supporting the charges;
- the date, time and place where the Board Meeting will be held;
- a copy of the procedure that will be followed by the Board;
- a reminder of the rights the student and parents have, including the right to counsel, the right to cross examine witnesses, and the right to present witnesses.

The hearing may be rescheduled by the parent by submitting a request showing good cause to the Superintendent at least 3 school days prior to the scheduled date of the hearing. The Superintendent shall determine if the request shows good cause.

After the hearing, the Board of Trustees shall decide whether to accept, reject, or modify the recommendation and direct the District Superintendent to inform the student, parent, legal guardian, or person with parental authority, of such action.

Suspension and Expulsion as it Relates to District Provided Transportation Services

Suspension or expulsion from school may also result in suspension from district sponsored transportation services.

It is important to note that students may also be suspended or expelled from riding any district sponsored transportation services for conduct violations occurring on district school buses even if they are still being allowed to attend school.

4. RIGHT TO INSPECT, REVIEW AND CORRECT EDUCATIONAL RECORDS

Definition: A person is any student, parent, legal guardian or individual with parental authority.

A person may inspect and review the student education records upon request by submitting to the school building principal an oral or written request that identifies as precisely as possible, the records they wish to inspect. The principal or other school authority shall make the needed arrangements as promptly as possible and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

A person has the right to seek to change any part of the student record they believe is inaccurate, misleading or in violation of student rights.

[See: Board Policy 3080 Maintenance of Student Records](#)

5. SCHOOL PROCESS

A student shall **not**:

1. Engage in disruptive behavior. Behavior displayed verbally or through action toward a school official or policy of the school, so the normal routine of the classroom or activity is significantly disrupted. This includes both verbal and physical hazing, conduct on school premises, going to and from school, while riding on any school transportation, or attending or participating in any school sponsored activity while within the jurisdiction, supervision and control of the school.
2. Be insubordinate to school authority. Insubordination is the failure to obey a request by a District employee or representative.
3. Initiate or participate in sexual harassment, bullying or harassment. This could include inappropriate displays of public affection.
4. Possess laser pointers or other items that disrupt the learning environment. These items will be confiscated and held in the office until parents or guardians make arrangements to pick them up at the office. Laptop computers, electronic note taking devices or other electrical/high tech devices used for educational purposes may be used in classes with the approval of the instructor.
5. Cheat or act in the conduct of cheating. Cheating means a student is acting dishonestly in carrying out any assignments. This may include, but is not limited to, copying assignments, using unauthorized crib sheets for tests, looking at someone else's test, plagiarizing, copying other's work from the Internet or building servers or permitting another person to perform the assignment.
6. Plagiarize or submit the work of others and claim it as their own. Plagiarism is defined as any of the following; directly copying a paper or portion of a paper without proper attribution; taking the ideas of another person without proper attribution; turning in someone else's work as your own; or citing works that the student did not consult in the writing of the paper. Changing the wording of another document does not avoid the problem of plagiarism. Plagiarism includes ghost writing, including text generated by AI, and the use paper mills and text spinners. Plagiarism is as much about the theft of ideas as it is words.
7. Use or possess roller blades, rolling shoes or similar devices in school.
8. Students are required to go directly to the office when directed to do so by any school personnel at the school site or at any school-sponsored activity. Failure to do so will be considered a major offense of insubordination.
9. Students are required to stop and identify themselves when asked by any school personnel or designee or any contractor acting on behalf of the District at any school site or at any school-sponsored activity. Failure to do so will be considered a major offense of insubordination.

Corrective Disciplinary Action

Minimum Corrective Action: Teacher-student conference and/or loss of credit for assignment, if appropriate.

Maximum Corrective Action: Suspension, Expulsion and/or Police Notification.

6. BULLYING, INTIMIDATION, HARASSMENT & HAZING PREVENTION AND REPORTING POLICY

The Board is committed to providing students with a safe and civil school environment free from harassment, intimidation and bullying. The Board and District will not tolerate harassment, intimidation or bullying in any form at school, school-related events (including off campus events), school sponsored activities, school buses or any event related to school business. Bullying, harassment, intimidation or hazing by students, staff, or third parties, is strictly prohibited and shall not be tolerated. Inciting, aiding, encouraging, coercing or directing others to commit acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying is prohibited under this policy.

The District expressly prohibits any form of intimidation, hazing, bullying or harassment including but not limited to the following: any gesture or written, verbal or physical act that is reasonably perceived as being motivated either by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, creed, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, culture, social origin or condition, marital status, political affiliation or a mental, physical or sensory disability, or by any other distinguishing characteristic.

Intimidation, bullying and harassment include acts that a reasonable person knew or should have known, under the circumstances the gesture or written or physical act (a) will have the effect of harming a student or damaging the student's property; or (b) will place a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or damage to the student's property; or (3) has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students in such a way as to disrupt or interfere with the school's educational mission or the education of any student.

Definitions:

"Third parties" include but are not limited to coaches, school volunteers, parents, school visitors, service contractors or others engaged in District business, such as employees of businesses or organizations participating in cooperative work program with the District, and others not directly subject to District control at inter-district and intra-District athletic competitions or other school events.

"Hazing" includes but is not limited to any act that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student for the purpose of initiation or as a condition or precondition of attaining membership in or affiliation with any District sponsored activity or grade-level attainment, including but not limited to forced consumption of any drink, alcoholic beverage, drug, or controlled substance, forced exposure to the elements, forced prolonged exclusion from social contact, sleep deprivation, or any other forced activity that could adversely affect the mental or physical health or safety of a student; requires, encourages, authorizes or permits another to be subject to wearing or carrying any obscene or physically burdensome article, assignment of pranks to be performed, or other such activities intended to degrade or humiliate.

"Bullying" means any harassment, intimidation, hazing, or threatening, insulting, or demeaning gesture or physical contact, including any intentional written, verbal, or electronic communication (cyberbullying) or threat directed against a student that is persistent, severe, or repeated, and that substantially interferes with a student's educational benefits, opportunities, or performance, that take place on or immediately adjacent to school grounds, at any school-sponsored activity, on school-provided transportation, at any official school bus stop, or anywhere conduct may be reasonable be considered to be a threat or an attempted intimidation of a student or staff member or an interference with school purposes or an educational function, that has the effect of:

- a. Physically harming a student or damaging a student's property;
- b. Knowingly placing a student in reasonable fear of physical harm to the student or damage to the student's property;
- c. Creating a hostile educational environment, or;
- d. Substantially and materially disrupts the orderly operation of a school.

“Electronic communication device” means any mode of electronic communication, including but not limited to computers, cell phones, smart watches, or the internet.

Reporting

All complaints about behavior that may violate this policy shall be promptly investigated. Any student, employee, or third party who has knowledge of conduct in violation of this policy or feels he/she has been a victim of hazing, harassment, intimidation, or bullying in violation of this policy is encouraged to immediately report his/her concerns to the building principal or the District Administrator, who have overall responsibility for such investigations. A student may also report concerns to a teacher or counselor, who will be responsible for notifying the appropriate District official. Students who have concerns about bullying or harassment from staff members are encouraged to report their concerns to the building principal. Complaints against the building principal shall be filed with the Superintendent. Complaints against the Superintendent or District Administrator shall be filed with the Board.

All staff are obligated to address bullying, harassment, hazing and intimidation as described in [Board Policy 5015](#), administrative procedures and / or staff and student handbooks.

Exhaustion of Administrative Remedies

A person alleging violation of any form of harassment, intimidation, hazing, or threatening, insulting, or demeaning gesture or physical contact, including any intentional written, verbal, or electronic communication, as stated above, may seek redress under any available law, either civil or criminal, after exhausting all administrative remedies.

Responsibilities

The District Administration shall be responsible for ensuring that notice of this policy is provided to staff and third parties and for the development of administrative regulations, including reporting and investigative procedures, as needed.

Consequences

Students whose behavior is found to be in violation of this policy will be subject to discipline up to and including expulsion. Staff whose behavior is found to be in violation of this policy will be subject to discipline up to and including dismissal. Third parties whose behavior is found to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to appropriate sanctions as determined and imposed by the District Administrator or the Board. Individuals may also be referred to law enforcement officials.

Retaliation and Reprisal

Retaliation is prohibited against any person who reports or is thought to have reported a violation, files a complaint, or otherwise participates in an investigation or inquiry. Such retaliation shall be considered a serious violation of Board policy, whether or not a complaint is substantiated. False charges shall also be regarded as a serious offense and will result in disciplinary action or other appropriate sanctions.

Corrective Disciplinary Action

Minimum Corrective Action: Administrative-student conference, except violations towards school personnel, which will result in suspension.

Maximum Corrective Action: Expulsion and/or police notification.

7. PERSON AND PROPERTY

A student shall not:

1. Exhibit hostile, physical or verbal action against another individual.
2. Fight or attempt to initiate a fight with another student or between other students.
3. Use profane, obscene, indecent, immoral or offensive language and/or gestures.
4. Defy the reasonable request or direction of school authority.
5. Damage, destroy or steal property belonging to the school or others.
6. Refuse to properly identify themselves to school authority upon request.
7. Bully haze or intimidate any student to cause them harm.

Corrective Disciplinary Action

Minimum Corrective Action: Administrative-student conference, except violations towards school personnel, which will result in suspension.

Maximum Corrective Action: Expulsion and/or police notification.

8. WEAPONS

Gun Free Schools

The Board will follow federal law for any student who uses, possesses, controls, or transfers a firearm on school property. The Board hereby authorizes the Superintendent to modify the disciplinary action on a case-by-case basis, including eliminating the requirement for expulsion.

The administrator may immediately suspend a student if, prior to a hearing, there is cause to believe the student brought a firearm to school or possessed a firearm at school. In the case of a firearm violation the student may be expelled if the trustees find that the student knowingly brought a firearm to school or possessed a firearm at school.

Possession of a Weapon in a School Building

The District will refer to law enforcement any person who possesses, carries, or stores a weapon in a school building, except as provided below. For the purposes of this section only, "school building" means all buildings owned or leased by the District that are used for instruction or for student activities; "weapon" means any type of firearm, a knife with a blade 4 or more inches in length, a sword, a straight razor, a throwing star, nun-chucks, brass or other metal knuckles, or any other article or instrument possessed with the purpose to commit a criminal offense. The Board may grant persons advance permission to possess, carry, or store a weapon in a school building. All persons who wish to possess, carry, or store a weapon in a school building must request permission of the Board at a regular meeting. The Board has sole discretion in deciding whether to allow a person to possess, carry, or store a weapon in a school building.

[See: Board Policy 3050 Student Discipline.](#)

9. PUBLIC AND SCHOOL SAFETY

A student shall not:

- Possess, use, carry, or bring dangerous or deadly weapons on property owned or leased by the school, on school-owned or chartered buses, to school functions whether on or off school property, and to school extracurricular activities. These weapons include but are not limited to any explosive device (including fireworks), firearms (including but not limited to pistol, revolver, rifle, shotgun, air gun, gas operated gun, spring gun, imitation, look-alike, replica and toy firearms) knives of any blade length, slingshot, nunchaku, artificial knuckles or any substance, or any object used or threatened to be used as a dangerous or deadly weapon. [Board Policy 3050 - Student Discipline](#)
 - Participate in any type of threats that substantially disrupts/threatens the education process.
 - Commit a felony or misdemeanor within school premises or during school-sponsored activities.
 - Possess or use a weapon within the District or at any school-related activity or events. The Board of Trustees determines that possession and/or use of a weapon by any person within the property of the district or at school-related activities, is detrimental to the welfare and safety of the students and school personnel. Except as provided in 45-8-361, MCA possession and/or use of any dangerous or deadly weapon in any school building, in any school vehicle, on school property, or at any school sponsored activity is prohibited. The District will refer to law enforcement any person who possesses, carries, or stores a weapon in a school building, except as described in Board Policy. For the purposes of this section only, "school building" means all buildings owned or leased by the District; "weapon" means any type of firearm, any regardless of blade length, a sword, a straight razor, a throwing star, nun-chucks, brass or other metal knuckles or any substance or any object used to threaten to be used as a dangerous or deadly weapon. The Board is obligated to expel any student who uses, possesses, controls, or transfers a firearm or any object that can reasonably be considered or looks like a firearm, for a definite period of time of at least one (1) calendar year, except that the Board may permit the Superintendent to modify the disciplinary action. The Board hereby authorizes the Superintendent to modify the disciplinary action on a case-by-case basis.
 - Wear spikes, studs or chains to school or any other ornament that could cause personal harm to the student or another student.
 - Wear clothing that features weapons of any kind or promotes violence.
 - Engage in any act of furtherance of any gang of gang activity. A "gang" is any group of two or more persons, whether formal or informal, who associate together to advocate, conspire, or commit:
 - a. one or more criminal acts.
 - b. acts which threaten the safety or well-being of property or persons including, but not limited to, harassment or intimidation, or
 - c. acts which in any way disrupt the school environment.
- *All acts will be reported to police officials.
- Commit arson, robbery, burglary, and/or extortion.
 - Commit a felony or misdemeanor within school premises or during school-sponsored activities.
 - Throw snowballs, engage in unnecessary rough play, throw objects such as rocks, pencils, rubber bands, etc.
 - Drive *motor vehicles* to school.

Corrective Disciplinary Action

Minimum Corrective Action: Teacher-student conference, except a violation of 7.1 may result in suspension.

Maximum Corrective Action: Expulsion and/or police notification.

10. MIDDLE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND TRUANCY

Students shall attend school regularly.

It is the policy of Helena School District No. 1 that regular school attendance is essential for all students and that schools will work cooperatively with students and parents toward that end. Regular and punctual attendance is important in the development of an effective learning environment as well as ensuring student success in the classroom. Good attendance habits are also necessary in the development of sound character traits and for success in the working world.

Regular school attendance is essential for the student to make the most of his or her education — to benefit from teacher-led activities, to build each day's learning on that of the previous day, and to grow as an individual. The District permits resident students of school age who are enrolled in a nonpublic or home school to enroll part-time in a District school at the parent's request.

Helena School District No. 1 attendance policies are developed in accordance with Montana State Attendance Laws. The building administration will establish procedures to execute the Helena School District No. 1 attendance policy and will inform students and parents of those procedures. The building administration will make the determination in all cases involving implementation and interpretation of the policy.

All absences fall into one of two categories:

Excused absence. Based upon School District No. 1 attendance policies and in accordance with State attendance laws, an excused absence is any absence authorized by a parent, legal guardian, or person with parental authority.

To be excused all absences must be communicated to the school attendance office within (24) twenty-four hours of the absence by a phone call (324-1008) or written note. IF THIS IS NOT DONE, THE STUDENT WILL BE CONSIDERED UNEXCUSED AND WILL RECEIVE DISCIPLINARY ACTION. Students are encouraged to have all excused absences approved in advance.

Unexcused absence. An unexcused absence is any absence which:

- a. Is not authorized by a parent, legal guardian, or person with parental authority.
- b. Is not communicated to the school within (24) twenty-four hours.
- c. Is a result of leaving school without prior notification to the attendance office by a parent, legal guardian, person with parental authority, or building administrator.
- d. Missing more than 5 minutes from a class without written consent.

Parents will be notified:

Parents will be notified of any unexcused absence by phone, text or e-mail. If a student accumulates ten (10) absences during the semester, the parent will be notified by letter and the building administration will determine whether legal action through the Lewis and Clark County Attorney is justified. Students who have attendance problems may be placed in an alternative educational setting to correct their attendance

behaviors.

Corrective Disciplinary Action First unexcused absence:

1. Parent or legal guardian will be notified when one unexcused absence has occurred.
2. Detention or time after school may be assigned.

Subsequent unexcused absences:

3. Student will not be readmitted until a parent conference has been held.
4. Detention or time after school may be assigned.

Minimum Corrective Action: Same as the first unexcused absence.

Maximum Corrective Action: Suspension/referral to youth probation officer/referral to truancy officer.

Procedure for an Absence

We ask that parents or guardians telephone the school and report every absence from school. **The attendance number at Helena Middle School is 324-1008.** This call ***must*** be made the first day the student is absent and each day the student remains absent. Students returning to school after an absence are welcome to attend their regularly scheduled classes if parents or guardians have contacted the school regarding the absence. If students return to school after the start of first period, they need to check in at the main office.

Those students whose parents or guardians have not contacted the attendance office will be called to the office of the Assistant Principal and will be required to provide written documentation of their absence or to contact the parent or guardian by telephone.

Students must provide such documentation within (24) twenty-four hours of the absence or it will be considered unexcused.

Leaving School for the Day

All students must check out with the attendance secretary when it is necessary to leave school during the day. ***Failure to do so will result in an unexcused absence.*** Students, who check out of the building during the day, are required to have their parent or guardian call the attendance office to excuse them or bring a note from their parent or guardian stating the date, destination and time the student is to check out of school. This note ***must*** be presented to the attendance secretary in the office in the morning before classes begin. **(Please note that calls or notes from emergency contacts, relatives or siblings cannot be accepted.)** Communication needs to come from a parent or guardian for all absences. Students will be released to emergency contacts only in an emergency situation and with approval of the administration.

A check out slip will be issued to the student which upon presenting to the teacher will release **the** student from class. **If a student is leaving during the day, a parent or guardian will need to physically come into the school to sign out their child.** This ensures the protection of the child and assists parents in making sure unwelcome contacts with their child do not take place in the school environment. Students are required to check in at the main office upon their return.

Attendance Eligibility for Activities, including Dances

Students must be in school the day of a scheduled event, unless permission is given by administration. An unexcused student may not participate that day or subsequent days if the activity occurs on a weekend.

Tardies

Students shall not be tardy.

It is the desire of the Helena Public Schools to promote punctuality, accountability and other time-management skills for all students. Students are required to be on time for all classes and other activities. A student who fails to be on time is considered tardy and is subject to disciplinary action. Students shall be in their room when the bell rings. Should a student receive two or more tardies in a class during a single quarter, the student shall be issued an after-school team detention. ***A neighborhood detention is a detention served with the teacher for which the infraction occurred.***

A 24-hour notice for ride arrangements is to be made by the student, if necessary. Each tardy after the initial tardy, per class period, will result in a neighborhood detention. Teachers will be responsible for assigning detentions by neighborhood on the second and all consecutive tardies to follow. Should a student fail to attend a detention, the penalty will be doubled. Should a student fail to attend the doubled detention, it will be considered insubordination, and the teacher will contact the parent and request a student-parent meeting to resolve the problem. If the student continues to demonstrate reluctance in completing assigned detentions, teachers will complete a referral on the student and send the referral to the office. If tardies continue, a parent conference will be convened.

Corrective Disciplinary Action

1 tardy = recorded, no penalty

2 tardies = after-school team detention

- All additional tardies result in after-school team detention.
- Excessive tardies may result in an office referral.
- Any student who refuses to serve detention will be charged with insubordination and will receive disciplinary action from the office.

11. STUDENT REGULATIONS CONCERNING USE/POSSESSION OF TOBACCO, TOBACCO INNOVATION PRODUCTS AND MARIJUANA PRODUCTS IN ANY FORM

The Board of Trustees of the Helena Public Schools is committed to providing a clean, healthy, safe and tobacco-free / marijuana-free school environment for students, employees, and the general public.

Use of tobacco, or tobacco innovations in any form is considered detrimental to the health of non-users as well as users of tobacco or tobacco innovations. The use of tobacco or tobacco innovations is inconsistent with the Helena Schools health education policy and is prohibited.

The use of marijuana in any form (including THC based CBD products) is prohibited. Marijuana products are products that contain marijuana for use by a consumer and include but are not limited to edible products, ointments, tinctures, marijuana derivatives, marijuana concentrates, and marijuana intended for use by smoking or vaping.

Helena Public Schools are tobacco-free and marijuana-free. The use of tobacco, or tobacco innovations, or marijuana in any form is prohibited from all school buildings, grounds, and school sponsored events 24 hours a day, 365 days per year unless used in a classroom or on other school property as part of a lecture, demonstration, or educational forum sanctioned by a school administrator or faculty member, concerning the risks associated with using tobacco or marijuana products or in connection with Native American

cultural activities..

Possession or use of tobacco, or tobacco innovation products or marijuana in any form by students, employees and the general public on district property, in district vehicles and at school sponsored events (whether on or off district property) is prohibited at all times.

The use of tobacco, or tobacco innovation products or marijuana in any form by all school and contract employees and all visitors on district property, in district vehicles and at school sponsored events (whether on or off district property) is prohibited at all times. This includes non-school hours and all events sponsored by the school or others.

[See: Board Policy 8225 Tobacco and Marijuana Free Schools](#)

Corrective Disciplinary Action

Minimum Corrective Action: One-day, out-of-school suspension and notification of police.

Maximum Corrective Action: Five-days, out-of-school suspension and notification of police.

12. STUDENT HEALTH REGULATIONS ON ALCOHOL, ALCOHOL INNOVATIONS, DRUG USE, ABUSE, AND DEPENDENCY

Students shall not use or possess any drug, including alcohol & alcohol innovations.

Helena School District No. 1 recognizes that alcohol/drug use and abuse can create serious health problems and that alcohol/drug dependency is a treatable illness. Health problems of youth are primarily the responsibility of the home. Community and schools should share in that responsibility because alcohol/drug problems often interfere with behavior, learning, and the fullest possible development of each student.

Helena School District No. 1, intending to intervene early in problems that interfere with learning and development, will have personnel contact students manifesting signs of use or abuse and will make an effort to both educate and assist them.

[See: Board Policy: 3050 Student Discipline](#)

Jurisdiction: Rules and implementation for Helena School District #1 Student Health Policy on Alcohol/Drug Use, Abuse and Dependency applies to all students:

1. While on school property
2. When going or coming to school
3. During the lunch period whether on or off the campus
4. During or when coming to or going from a school sponsored activity.

Student Behavior: Student behavior is always expected to be appropriate. Guidelines of student behavior concerning the Alcohol/Drug Policy include the following expectations. A student shall not:

1. Use, possess, distribute, purchase, sell alcohol, tobacco, or tobacco innovations;
2. Use, possess, distribute, purchase, or sell illegal drugs or controlled substances, including medical marijuana, look-alike drugs, prescription drugs, and drug paraphernalia;

Definitions: Unlawful drugs and controlled substances are those defined as illegal under the laws of the United States, the state of Montana and/or the city of Helena Ordinances. Illegal activities will be reported to the police and/or applicable authority when any of the above activities occur on school

property, while in attendance at school or school activities, while coming to or going from school or a school activity, or

during the lunch period whether on or off campus. Helena School District #1 response to these infractions may be independent of or in conjunction with police action and will result in disciplinary consequences as outlined more fully below.

Corrective Disciplinary Action

First Violation:

Three-day out-of-school suspension (unexcused).

*Unserved suspension occurring at the end of the school year will be served the following school year commencing on the sixth day of school. This applies to all returning students.

Second and Subsequent Violations:

Five day out-of-school suspension (unexcused).

*Unserved suspension occurring at the end of the school year will be served the following school year commencing on the sixth day of school. This applies to all returning students.

* Under any and all circumstances, the administration retains the option of recommending to the Superintendent the removal of the student from the school setting.

Minimum Corrective Action: Confiscation of contraband, notification of parents and law enforcement and suspension.

Maximum Corrective Action: Confiscation of contraband, notification of parents and law enforcement and recommendation for expulsion.

As set forth above, school officials may administer the level of disciplinary consequences deemed appropriate in light of any mitigating and/or aggravating circumstances and may pursue a recommendation for expulsion in connection with a first offense or any subsequent offense. Under any and all circumstances, the administration retains the option of recommending to the Superintendent the removal of the student from the school setting.

Violations of this rule will be cumulative during attendance at Helena schools from Grades 6-8. A breathalyzer may be used at the discretion of a building administrator when it is necessary to ascertain whether a student has violated this rule with respect to alcohol use.

13. EXTRA/CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES PROCEDURE REGARDING ALCOHOL, ALCOHOL INNOVATIONS, TOBACCO, TOBACCO INNOVATIONS, VAPING PRODUCTS, AND OTHER DRUG USE/POSSESSION & GENERAL CODE OF CONDUCT

Administrative Regulations Regarding Alcohol, Alcohol Innovations, Tobacco, Tobacco Innovations, Vaping Products, and Other Drug Use by Students in Extra/Co- Curricular Activities

Students participating in school-sponsored activities assume a responsibility to fellow students, the district, and the community to be law-abiding citizens.

The administration shall place limits, up to and including restricting a student from participating in

school sponsored activities or being awarded school honors, if a student is found by school officials to have violated Board Policy or committed an act prohibited by state or federal law. An appeal process will be available to all students under the District's "Uniform Complaint Policy".

[See: Board Policy 1085 Uniform Complaint Policy](#)

Helena School District No. 1 recognizes the use of alcohol, tobacco, other drugs and drug paraphernalia as a significant health problem for many adolescents, resulting in negative effects on behavior, learning and the total development of each individual. Coaches and advisors of activities have a unique opportunity to observe, confront and assist young people. The importance of the parent/guardian as the primary role model in the education and guidance of their children concerning alcohol, tobacco and other drugs is recognized and emphasized by Helena School District personnel.

In addition, schools are an integral part of the community and must confirm and support existing state and local laws which prohibit the use of alcohol, tobacco, other drugs and drug paraphernalia by youth. Federal law requires schools to have consistent alcohol, tobacco and other drug policies that give a strong no-use message to all youth.

Students who participate in extra/co-curricular activities must be willing to make the commitment to adhere to the regulations that govern these activities.

Therefore, middle school and high school students who participate in District extra/co-curricular activities are subject to all District no-use regulations, conditions, and consequences.

Regulations - During the school year and the season of practice, play or rehearsal a student shall not:

- (1) Use, possess, buy, sell, or distribute alcohol, tobacco, tobacco innovations, vaping products, unlawful drugs, controlled substances, hallucinogens, inhalants or drug paraphernalia. (It is not a violation for a student to be in possession of a legally defined drug specifically prescribed for the student's own use by his/her doctor that is being used in the prescribed manner).
- (2) Students participating in school sponsored activities assume a responsibility to fellow students, the district, and the community to be law-abiding citizens.

The administration shall place limits, up to and including restricting a student from participating in school sponsored activities or being awarded school honors, if a student is found by school officials to have violated Board Policy or committed an act prohibited by state or federal law.

An appeal process will be available to all students under the District's "Uniform Complaint Policy".

[See: Board Policy 1085 Uniform Complaint Policy](#)

Duration - Except where otherwise stated, these regulations are in effect from the date of the first practice for fall activities, through the academic school year and include any school sponsored activity that extends beyond the academic school year. Violations will be cumulative from the first day of the activity involvement throughout the student's participation as a freshman, sophomore, junior and senior until graduation from Helena School District No.1. A student's suspension from an extracurricular activity may also adversely affect other areas upon return. Upon return from any suspension, the coach or sponsor will determine varsity letter, playing time, starting position, performance role; and offices held in groups.

All unserved suspensions occurring at the end of the school year will be served the following school year commencing on the first day of the MHSA fall season.

Disciplinary Procedures: Investigation and Appeal

Any determination that a violation of these regulations has occurred will be made only after a meeting is held with the student and he or she is presented with the information indicating that a violation has occurred. The student must be afforded the opportunity to provide information in response. If a determination is made following that meeting that a violation has occurred, the student will be notified of that determination and of the consequences of that determination. Any determination that results in consequences being administered as per these regulations will be provided to the affected student in writing. If a student disagrees with a determination made by the building administration under these regulations, the student may seek review of that decision by the District Activities Director, and may secure further review of the determination by the District Superintendent and Board of Trustees according to the procedure outlined in the Uniform Complaint Policy.

First Violation: The student will be:

- required to register for and complete a district-approved education course at his/her parent's expense and temporarily suspended from competing or performing in extra/co-curricular activities for a period of thirty- four [34] calendar days. If a student self-reports a violation to the Activity Leader or designee, the temporary suspension period will be reduced to twenty (20) calendar days.
- suspended from team practices for up to five (5) days following notification.

In either situation, the student must (1) provide appropriate proof of completion of the education component outlined above; (2) continue to attend and participate in activity practices during the temporary period of suspension; and (3) complete a team/activity service as determined by the administrator and activity leader. The student's return to full participation in the activity is conditioned on fulfilling all of the requirements set forth above.

Second Violation: The student will be:

- required to register for and complete a district-approved chemical assessment program at his/her parent's expense; and
- temporarily suspended from competing or performing in extra/co-curricular activities for a period of sixty [60] calendar days. If a student self-reports a violation to the Activity Leader or designee, the temporary suspension period will be reduced to fifty (50) calendar days.
- suspended from team practices for up to five (5) days following notification.

In either situation, the student must (1) provide appropriate proof of completion of the assessment component outlined above; (2) continue to attend and participate in activity practices during the period of temporary suspension; and (3) complete a team/activity service as determined by the administrator and activity leader. The student's return to full participation in the activity is conditioned on fulfilling the requirements set forth above.

Third Violation: The student will be deemed ineligible for participation in activities for a period of one calendar year. The student may, however, submit a petition to the District Superintendent no sooner than ninety (90) days after the incident requesting that he or she to be allowed to re-enroll in activities. Such a request must be accompanied by (1) a post-incident chemical dependency evaluation conducted by a licensed chemical dependency counselor paid for by the parent and (2) a demonstration that all

recommendations made in the assessment are being or have been satisfactorily met. The District Superintendent has the discretion to grant or deny the request based on his/her consideration of the relevant circumstances. The Superintendent's decision may be appealed to the Board of Trustees as outlined in the Uniform Complaint Procedure.

Extra / Co-Curricular Activities – All Levels

Baseball	Golf	+Annual
Basketball	Wrestling	+Newspaper
Softball	+Student Government	+BPA
Soccer		
Cross Country	+DECA	+Band
Swimming	+VICA	+Chorus
Tennis	+Plymouth	+Orchestra
Track	Troubleshooters	+Drama
Flag Football	+Skills USA	+Cheerleading
Football		
Volleyball	+Speech	
+Drill Team		

+Because these are yearlong programs the suspension will coincide with the MHSA Fall, Winter Spring calendar.

14. BUS BEHAVIOR CONDUCT GUIDELINES AND CONSEQUENCES

Each transported student has the right to a safe and enjoyable ride to and from school that is free from intimidation, threat or harassment. Good conduct of all transported students while waiting for the school bus and while traveling to

and from school is primary for a safe and enjoyable ride for all students. Behavior/Conduct codes outlined in this handbook apply on all school district buses.

The district has a video that explains transportation safe riding practices that may be viewed on the Helena School District Transportation website or will be made available upon request.

The School District has established student behavior procedures that apply to all transported students while on the school bus and while in school bus loading or unloading areas. The bus and the bus stop are extensions of the school day. Each individual student, as well as his/her parents, or guardians, is responsible for the behavior of that student while on the school bus and in school bus loading or unloading areas.

Transportation service is a privilege that is granted by the district to eligible students and their parents or guardians that is contingent upon proper behavior according to established district policies, rules and standards. A student's eligibility to ride the school bus may be suspended or revoked for a violation of school bus safety or conduct rules and standards, or for violation of any other law or policy governing student conduct on a school bus. Revocation of a student's bus riding privileges is not considered an exclusion, expulsion or suspension from school, however unacceptable conduct on the school bus may result in suspension or expulsion from school. It shall be the responsibility of the parent or guardian to transport students to and from school when bus riding privileges are revoked. The district will not provide alternative transportation to a student whose transportation privileges have been suspended or revoked.

(*Decisions regarding special education students will take into account related disabilities and individual

education requirements pertaining to transportation).

Suspension or expulsion from school may also result in suspension from district sponsored transportation services.

It is important to note that students may also be suspended or expelled from riding any district sponsored transportation services for conduct violations occurring on school district busses even if they are still being allowed to attend school.

In addition to the student behavior/conduct codes & violations outlined in this handbook, a student shall not:

- Eat drink or litter on the bus
- Leave the seat or stand while the bus is in motion.
- Use profanity, verbal abuse, harassment, obscene gestures or have possession of unacceptable material
- Provide false identification
- Ride an unassigned bus or use an unassigned bus stop.
- Open windows past the safety line.
- Attempt to ride a bus during a bus suspension.
- Be disobedient or disrespectful to the driver.
- Hang out the windows.
- Throw any object.
- Hold onto or attempt to hold onto any portion of the exterior of the bus
- Enter or leave the bus through emergency door or tampering with bus equipment unless authorized.
- Be involved in any activity that distracts the driver from safely driving the bus.
- Refuse to wear a seatbelt.

Corrective Disciplinary Action

Minimum Corrective Action: Driver identifies the unacceptable behavior and informs the student of the intent to complete a conduct report if the behavior continues.

Maximum Corrective Action: Unlimited transportation services suspension, school suspension, expulsion, and/or police notification.

Bus Severe Clause: Busing Behavior Severe Clause

If a student performs an act that severely and immediately jeopardizes the safety of students, the district may suspend the student from riding the bus. The district will attempt to notify the parent(s) or guardian of this action by telephone as soon as possible after the route is completed. A written incident report will be prepared and sent to the parent(s) or guardian. Riding privileges will not be reinstated until after a conference is held with the Transportation Specialist, principal, student and parent(s) or guardian. Law Enforcement may be notified in the event that criminal activity has transpired or assistance is required by the driver or district. Behavior deemed severe may result in suspension or expulsion from school.

- When less than sixty (60) school days are left in the academic year, the remainder of the suspension shall be served in the next school year.

15. THREAT ASSESSMENT PROTOCOL

The safety of all students and staff is a priority for the Helena Public Schools. A threat assessment protocol has been designed for use with students who are engaged in circumstances that are determined to suggest harmful or dangerous behavior.

The following objectives are key components of the process:

- Identify and screen threats to determine the action required.
- Conduct Behavioral Threat Assessments for threats determined to be viable.
- Organize resources and intervention strategies based on the level of concern to manage situations that involve students that pose threats to other students, the staff and/or themselves.
- Maintain a culture of safety among students, teachers and parents and foster a learning environment that is free from harmful or dangerous behavior.

Parents will be informed and involved throughout the process

16. LAW ENFORCEMENT

Questioning of Students

Law enforcement or social service workers must contact students through the administrative office. Students will not usually be questioned or interviewed by law enforcement or other lawful authorities while at school. When law enforcement officers or other lawful authorities, however, wish to question or interview a student at school or the principal requests that the student be interviewed at school:

- The principal shall verify and record the identity of the officer or other authority.
- If the interview is not at the request of the principal, the principal shall ascertain the authority of law enforcement to question or interview the student at the school. If the interview is by court order or other exigencies exist (concern about loss/damage of evidence, flight from jurisdiction, or health, safety, or welfare of the student or other students or staff), the principal has the discretion to allow the interview to take place. Otherwise, if law enforcement can reasonably interview the student at a time when the student is not in school, the principal may, absent a court order or warrant, deny the request for an immediate interview of a student.
- The principal will make reasonable efforts to notify parents unless the officer produces a court order prohibiting the notification of the parents.
- In the event that a parent cannot be present or cannot be reached, the principal will observe the interview.
- Law enforcement must comply with all legal requirements regarding notification of parents and consent prior to interviewing students.
- Social service workers may be permitted to interview students at a school consistent with Montana law. The principal will observe the meeting if the social service worker declines to notify the parents.

Students Taken into Custody

State law requires the District to permit a student to be taken into legal custody by a law enforcement officer or probation officer to comply with a lawful court order, a warrant for arrest, or a law enforcement determination that probable cause exists for the arrest. To the extent practicable, the arrest should be conducted out of the view of other students in the administration offices. A social service worker may take custody of a student with a lawful court order or under the powers of MCA § 41-3-301.

The principal will immediately notify the Superintendent and will make reasonable attempts to notify a parent unless the officer or official produces a court order prohibiting the notification of the parents. Because the principal does not have the authority to prevent or delay a custody action, notification will most likely be after the fact.

Service of Process

At times, law enforcement may seek to serve a student with a subpoena or other legal documents (i.e., complaint, summons). Absent a court order, the principal has the discretion to determine whether service at school is disruptive to the educational environment. If service is directed by a court or is not disruptive to the educational environment, the principal will make reasonable attempts to contact the parents regarding the service. Where the principal has determined that service would be disruptive to the educational environment, the principal will make a reasonable attempt to coordinate with law enforcement to serve the student when school is not in session. Service on a student will be accomplished out of the view of other students in the administration offices.

CHAPTER III: DISTRICT POLICIES / PROCEDURES / FORMS

1. HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 1 BOARD POLICY UNIFORM COMPLAINT POLICY 1085

[See: Board Policy 1085 Uniform Complaint Policy](#)

The Board establishes this Uniform Complaint Procedure as a means to address lunch arising within the District. This Uniform Complaint Procedure is intended to be used for all complaints except those governed by a specific process in state or federal law that supersedes this process or by a collective bargaining agreement. Matters covered by a collective bargaining agreement will be reviewed in accordance with the terms of the applicable agreement.

The District will endeavor to respond to and resolve complaints without resorting to this formal complaint procedure and, when a complaint is filed, to address the complaint as outlined in this policy. The right of a person to prompt and equitable resolution of a complaint filed hereunder will not be impaired by a person's pursuit of other remedies. Use of this complaint procedure is not a prerequisite to pursue other remedies and use of this complaint procedure does not extend any filing deadline related to pursuit of other remedies.

The District requires that all individuals use this complaint procedure when the individual believes the Board or its employees or agents have violated the individual's rights under state or federal law or Board policy. Complaints against a building administrator shall be filed with the appropriate Assistant Superintendent. Complaints against a District level administrator shall be filed with the Superintendent. Complaints against the Superintendent or Clerk shall be filed with the Board.

When a complaint alleges sexual harassment or a violation of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (the Civil Rights Act), Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the building administrator shall turn the complaint over to the applicable District nondiscrimination coordinator. The coordinator shall ensure an investigation is completed in accordance with the applicable procedure. In the case of a sexual harassment or a Title IX complaint the applicable investigation and appeal procedure is [Policy 3000](#) or [5005](#). In the case of a disability complaint, the coordinator shall complete an investigation and file a report and recommendation with the building administrator for decision. Appeal of a decision in a disability complaint will be handled in accordance with this policy.

Deadlines requiring District action in this procedure may be extended for reasons related but not limited to the District's retention of legal counsel and District investigatory procedures. Additional timelines may be waived with the agreement of both parties.

Retaliation

Any individual participating in an investigation or proceeding under this policy shall notify the appropriate building or district administrator if that person believes that he or she is being retaliated against for participating in the investigation or proceeding. The District prohibits retaliation against individuals making complaints and/or participating in any investigation that may ensue under this policy. The District may discipline students or staff members determined to have retaliated against any individual for participating in an investigation or proceeding under this policy.

Level 1: Informal

An individual with a complaint is first encouraged to discuss it with the appropriate employee or building administrator with the objective of resolving the matter promptly and informally. If the complaint can't be resolved within (fifteen)15 school days of the incident that generated the complaint, then the complainant may file a written complaint as outlined in Level 2.

Level 2: Building Administrator

When a complaint has not been or cannot be resolved at Level 1, an individual may file a signed and dated written complaint stating: (1) the nature of the complaint; (2) a description of the event or incident giving rise to the complaint, including any school personnel involved; and (3) the remedy or resolution requested. The written complaint must be filed within fifteen (15) school days of the event or incident.

When a complaint alleges a violation of Board policy or procedure, the building administrator or supervisor will investigate and attempt to resolve the complaint. The administrator or supervisor will respond in writing to the complaint, within fifteen (15) school days of receipt of the written complaint.

If the complainant disagrees with the findings of the administrator or supervisor the complainant may request, in writing, that the appropriate Assistant Superintendent review the administrator's or supervisor's decision. (See Level 3.) This request must be submitted to the appropriate Assistant Superintendent within fifteen (15) school days of receipt of the administrator's or supervisor's decision.

Level 3: Assistant Superintendent

If the complainant appeals the administrator's or supervisor's decision provided for in Level 2, the Assistant Superintendent will review the complaint, any relevant documents and the administrator's or supervisor's decision. The Assistant Superintendent will respond in writing to the appeal, within fifteen (15) school days of the Assistant Superintendent's receipt of the written appeal.

If the complainant disagrees with the findings of the Assistant Superintendent the complainant may request, in writing, that the Superintendent consider an appeal of the Assistant Superintendent's decision. (See Level 4.) This request must be submitted in writing to the Superintendent, within fifteen (15) school days of the Assistant Superintendent's written response to the complaint.

Level 4: Superintendent

If the complainant appeals the Assistant Superintendent's decision provided for in Level 3, the Superintendent will review the complaint and the Assistant Superintendent's decision. The Superintendent

will respond in writing to the appeal, within fifteen (15) school days of the Superintendent's receipt of the written appeal.

If the complainant disagrees with the findings of the Superintendent, the complainant may request, in writing, that the Board consider an appeal of the Superintendent's decision. (See Level 5) This request must be submitted in writing to the Superintendent, within fifteen (15) school days of the Superintendent's written response to the complaint, for transmission to the Board.

Level 5: The Board

Upon written appeal of a complaint alleging a violation of the individual's rights under state or federal law or Board policy upon which the Board of Trustees has the authority to remedy, the Board may consider the decisions made in Level 2, 3 and 4. Upon receipt of written request for appeal, the Chair will either; place the appeal on the agenda of a regular or special Board meeting or respond to the complaint with an explanation of why the appeal will not be heard by the Board of Trustees in accordance with this policy. The Board will report its decision on the appeal, in writing, within thirty (30) school days of the Board meeting at which the Board considered the appeal or the recommendation of the panel.

A decision of the Board is final, unless it is appealed pursuant to Montana law within the period provided by law.

[See: Board Policy: 1085 Uniform Complaint Procedure](#)

2. PARENT RIGHTS

All fundamental parental rights are exclusively reserved to the parent of a child without obstruction or interference by a government entity in accordance with state and federal law (including without limitation to statutes and the common law) and District policy.

3. RECORDING MEETINGS – NOT ALLOWED

For the security and integrity of our school community's communications, recording meetings with school staff is not permitted. This procedure has been implemented to ensure the accuracy and trustworthiness of the information exchanged during these discussions and meetings.

The ability to modify or manipulate recorded content raises concerns about the potential misrepresentation of conversations. By not allowing the recording of meetings, our goal is to maintain a transparent and reliable platform for communication among all participants.

The importance of clear and open communication between school staff and stakeholders is very important. If a participant has concerns about retaining accurate information from a meeting the individual is encouraged to take notes or request written summaries from the appropriate staff member.

4. RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

Each student has a right to individually, voluntarily, and silently pray or meditate in school in a manner that does not disrupt instructional or other activities of the school. Students may also pray in groups and discuss their religious views with other students as long as they are not disruptive or coercive. The school will not require, encourage, or coerce a student to engage in or to refrain from such prayer or meditation during any school activity. Student prayer, even if nonsectarian or non-proselytizing, will not be broadcast over the school public address system.

Students may study religions ancillary to the studies of human history and development and various national, cultural, and ethnic groups. This study will give neither preferential nor derogatory treatment to

any religion or religious belief. The inclusion of religious music, symbols, art, or writings during instruction or in school programs or performances may occur where the religious content has a historical and/or independent educational purpose consistent with the approved curriculum. A student may read the Bible or other religious material during free reading time or when self-selected and consistent with a classroom or course requirements. For additional information, please see [Policy 2103 Recognition of Religious Beliefs and Customs](#)

A student will not be released from school at times other than at the end of the school day except with permission from the principal or designee and according to the building sign-out procedures. Students will be released, with a parental request in writing, for the purpose of receiving religious instruction. Unless the principal has granted approval because of extenuating circumstances, a student will not regularly be released before the end of the instructional day.

5. DISTRICT BUS SERVICES

Helena Public Schools has elected to provide student transportation services as allowed by the Montana Codes Annotated (MCA 20-10-121). The District's Transportation Department strives to provide safe, reliable and professional transportation services to its students. The primary mode of transportation offered is on school busses that are operated by First Student, a private vendor under a contract managed by the District's Transportation Department. This section of the Student Handbook is designed to provide an overview and reference information for the bus services offered. For information regarding bus behavior conduct guidelines and consequences please refer to the section of the handbook entitled "Student Responsibility and Codes of Conduct – Section 9.0". Do not hesitate to contact the District's Transportation Department if you have questions or require additional information. Our contact information is:

Transportation Department/Helena
Public Schools 3020 Big Sky Loop
Helena, Montana 59602 Phone: 324-2100
Email: transportation@helenaschools.org
Web Site: <https://helenaschools.org/departments/transportation/>

Bussing Eligibility

A student is eligible for district-provided transportation if they:

1. Resides in an attendance area and the student's residence is greater than 3 miles from the school for high school students or outside the established walk zone for K-8 students as defined for each individual school's attendance area. Bussing eligibility walk zone information may be reviewed on the district's website (<https://helenaschools.org/departments/transportation/>)
2. Resides in the school's area of attendance and has an Individual Education Plan (IEP – Special Needs) that includes transportation as a related service in the IEP.

A student is ineligible for district-provided transportation if they*:

1. Lives less than 3 miles from the school of attendance for high school students or within a K-8 walk zone.
2. Resides in a District that does not have an applicable transportation agreement with the Helena Public Schools.
3. Resides beyond his/her school's attendance boundary as the result of a Parent Choice Boundary Exception, regardless of mileage to the school of attendance.

4. Has been temporarily placed in a District program less than 15 days.
5. Loses riding privileges for discipline reasons.

As defined by MCA 20-10-101(5) 2015:

"Transportation" means:

- (a) a district's conveyance of a pupil by a school bus between the pupil's legal residence or an officially designated bus stop and the school designated by the trustees for the pupil's attendance; or
- (b) "individual transportation" by which a district is relieved of actually conveying a pupil. Individual transportation may include paying the parent or guardian for conveying the pupil, reimbursing the parent or guardian for the pupil's board and room, or providing supervised correspondence study or supervised home study.

Inclement Weather and Bus Delays or Cancellations

In case of severe weather or other emergencies, official information about school closings will be broadcast on the local radio stations. Information will also be posted on the district web site (<https://helenaschools.org/>), the Transportation department's webpage (<https://helenaschools.org/departments/transportation/>), Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/HSD1Transportation/>), via BrightArrow and via the Parent Portal app. If there are inclement weather delays or canceled bus routes, information will be announced on media outlets through the Lincoln Center Administration Office.

Bus Registration

Bus registration should be completed each school year. Students are not rolled over from one year to the next. All bus registrations will need to be submitted through our Parent Portal App or in-person. For more information on our Parent Portal app, please visit <https://helenaschools.org/departments/transportation/parent-portal/>.

High School students who reside under the 3 mile limit and Elementary/Middle School students residing within the walk zones prepared for each K-5 and Middle School may request a courtesy ride; however eligibility is determined upon the availability of an established bus route and bus capacity Bussing for students that do not live within the designated transportation areas shall be provided on a first come - first served basis and are only granted on a case by case basis. Please call the Transportation Department for more information.

Bus photo identification cards are strongly recommended for parents with children in kindergarten or first grade. The time/location for kindergarten and first grade student bus photo identification card pictures will be posted on the website <https://helenaschools.org/departments/transportation/>), Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/HSD1Transportation/>) and via BrightArrow.

Guest Pass

Students who are not registered riders may ride a bus with a registered bus student as a guest. Students will need to get a temporary pass from the school of their attendance. Students must have a note from a guardian that states who they will be riding with, the bus number and the location of the bus stop. The note must be verified by the school and signed off by the principal or designated school official. Students who do not follow the guest pass procedures will not be allowed to ride the school bus.

Bus Routes, Stops and Schedules

The bus stops are created with safety taking precedence over convenience. Bus routes are developed with safety and efficiency as top priorities. Roads must be county or city maintained for busses to traverse them. The district recognizes the travel time on buses extends the day for students. The district strives to minimize the time students must ride the bus. Transfer buses are used to minimize ride times for students given the geographic locations and numbers of school sites the district operates. Bus routes, stops and schedules are approved by the Lewis and Clark County Transportation Committee in June of each year.

Students are recommended to be at the bus stops 5 minutes prior to the scheduled time of arrival. Buses can arrive up to 2 minutes prior to their scheduled-pickup time. If the bus does not arrive as scheduled (up to 15 minutes late), please call the First Student dispatcher at 227-7400. Afternoon routes may arrive early at their designated stop due to a wide range of circumstances; Monday early outs, lack of student loads, district early releases, etc. The individual students, and their parents, are responsible for the student's behavior and conduct until the student has boarded or departed the bus.

Parent Portal Program

1. Parents may register for a free application to track the location of their student's bus. This application allows parents to see if their bus is running on time.
2. All bus students will be asked to carry a bus card. This card will inform parents when their students bus stop was picked up, via push notification message.
3. If parents have any questions about Parent Portal, they should contact the Helena Public Schools Transportation Office.

For more information or to download the app go to:
<https://helenaschools.org/departments/transportation/parent-portal/>

If parents have any questions about Parent Portal, they should contact the Helena Public Schools Transportation Office at 324-2100.

Transportation of School Related and Non-School Related Items

Contraband, weapons, flammable liquids, animals or other dangerous, objectionable or non-school related items shall not be transported on a school bus. School related items transported on the bus shall be small enough to be transported on the student's lap, adjacent seat or under the seat of the bus. School related items that would block exit isles or extend above the back of the seat will not be transported on the school bus. If you are unsure if an item is allowed, please contact the Transportation Department prior to the day your child plans on transporting the material or object.

Bus Behavior Conduct Guidelines and Consequences

Each transported student has the right to a safe and enjoyable ride to and from school that is free from intimidation, threat or harassment. Good conduct of all transported students while waiting for the school bus and while traveling to and from school is primary for a safe and enjoyable ride for all students.

The School District has established student behavior procedures that apply to all transported students while on the school bus and while in school bus loading or unloading areas. The bus and the bus stop are extensions of the school day. Each individual student, as well as their parents, or guardians, is responsible for the behavior of that student while on the school bus and in school bus loading or unloading areas.

Transportation service is a privilege that is granted by the district to eligible students and their parents or guardians that is contingent upon proper behavior according to established district policies, rules and standards. A student's eligibility to ride the school bus may be suspended or revoked for a violation of school bus safety or conduct rules and standards, or for violation of any other law or policy governing student conduct on a school bus. Revocation of a student's bus riding privileges is not considered an exclusion, expulsion or suspension from school, however unacceptable conduct on the school bus may result in suspension or expulsion from school. It shall be the responsibility of the parent or guardian to transport students to and from school when bus riding privileges are revoked. The district will not provide alternative transportation to a student whose transportation privileges have been suspended or revoked. (*Decisions regarding special education students will take into account related disabilities and individual education requirements pertaining to transportation).

Suspension or expulsion from school may also result in suspension from district sponsored transportation services.

It is important to note that students may also be suspended or expelled from riding any district sponsored transportation services for conduct violations occurring on school district busses even if they are still being allowed to attend school.

Corrective Disciplinary Action

Minimum Corrective Action: Driver identifies the unacceptable behavior and informs the student of the intent to complete a conduct report if the behavior continues.

Maximum Corrective Action: Unlimited transportation services suspension, school suspension, expulsion, and/or police notification.

Bus Seatbelt Procedures

It is the goal of the Helena Public Schools Transportation Dept. to provide the safest student transportation system available. The District requires that all students riding the school district buses comply with state law regarding the use of seatbelts. Students 6 years old or younger that are less than 60 pounds are required to utilize child seats and wear 5 point safety harnesses. Students who may require assistance in using seatbelts should ask the bus driver for help so that all students are safely belted in their seat before the bus is put in motion. Drivers will announce prior to the bus leaving that each student needs to be in their assigned seat and seatbelts fastened. Students refusing to use seatbelts in a legal and safe manner will be subject to school district disciplinary actions. Repeated refusal to wear seatbelts will result in suspended riding privileges from the bus.

Helena Public Schools Transportation Video and Audio

All buses are equipped with audio and video capabilities. The school district will only retain approximately 2 weeks audio and video storage history. The Helena School District does not guarantee the working operation of the surveillance system and therefore cannot guarantee the storage of up to 2 weeks of surveillance storage. Individuals who would like to view information pertaining to their child should make an appointment with the School District Transportation Department. Copies of bus video will not be released except under the request of court ordered subpoena.

Transportation Questions

Parents having any questions or requiring additional information are encouraged to contact the Helena School District Transportation Department at 324-2100.

6. MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE VIOLENT & SEXUAL OFFENDERS REGISTRY

The Montana Department of Justice maintains a Sexual or Violent Offenders Registry that can be reviewed online at (<https://dojmt.gov/sexual-or-violent-offender-registry/>). This website provides the last known residences for these individuals and supplemental information regarding the nature and dates of the crime(s) that caused them to be listed in this registry.

While the district does not track or monitor the individuals that may reside in the vicinity of schools or bus stops, it is our intent to make you aware that this registry information is available to the public. The Montana Department of Justice also provides on-line guidance and educational materials for both Parents and Educators on their website and we encourage parents and guardians to review this information and familiarize themselves with the resources that are available to help address these situations.

7. PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY

In the event of a declared public health emergency as determined by the Board of Trustees or a public health service the Board authorizes the Superintendent to take appropriate action to protect the health and safety of all students, staff, and visitors to include but not limited to closure of school buildings, implementation of infection control measures, and other appropriate safety actions.

The Superintendent will communicate with parents, citizens, and other stakeholders about the actions to be implemented per this policy.

[See: Board Policy 7061 Public Health Emergency](#)

8. TECHNOLOGY USE/AGREEMENT

Helena School District #1

2026-2027 Student Technology Use Agreement for Students in Grades 6-12

Helena School District #1 uses voice, data, and video electronic communication systems, including but not limited to devices, networks, servers, and hosted services, that allow educational opportunities for students and staff to communicate, collaborate, learn, and publish information. These system resources

must be used to support education and/or research, and all student use must adhere to the educational goals and objectives of the district. Communications using the district systems are not private. Systems support and maintenance may require review and inspection of network activity, to include but not limited to student files and email.

21st Century Learning Skills require that students collaborate, think critically, communicate, create and innovate. There are many technological tools that support the development of 21st century skills (e.g., blogs, wikis, social networking sites, etc.). The district supports the use of these tools to enhance and enrich the learning and teaching environment. These tools must be used in support of education and not interfere with other student use of the systems.

Internet Filtering Statement

To comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act and to the extent practical, technology protection measures shall be used to block or filter as defined by law. Filtering is by no means meant to supersede the guidelines and requirements described in this document. Filtered access to some sites may still violate the Technology Use Agreement.

Appropriate Use of the Internet, Systems, and Technology Equipment

Students are responsible for appropriate behavior when using District technology systems. The lists below do not cover every possible situation. If you have any question about appropriate behavior, ask your teacher, librarian, or technology teacher.

I will

- limit my bandwidth use on shared networks.
- use district and school technology to advance my education.
- use extreme caution when giving out personal information on the Internet, such as full name, address, telephone numbers, etc.
- take care of the equipment and leave it in good condition for the next student.
- follow instructions related to technology of all school personnel.
- use chat, email, and online discussions appropriately. (Remember that chats are not private.)
- ask for help with or report equipment or software problems.
- respect classroom expectations for technology use.
- only print what is necessary or assigned.
- immediately report any inappropriate email, chat, websites, etc. to school personnel.
- sign out/log off when finished using a shared device.
- cite my digital sources correctly.
- follow local, state, and federal copyright laws.
- return all borrowed technology equipment promptly and in the same condition as I received it.
- follow these expectations at school and at home.

I will not

- share passwords.
- try to gain unauthorized or illegal access to district technology.
- access, distribute, download, or store any illegal, pornographic, abusive, obscene, or harassing materials on any District network or device.
- cyber-bully. Examples of cyber-bullying include but are not limited to sending threatening emails, posting derogatory or personal comments and/or photos or videos about or of someone on any online platform, sending harassing text messages, threatening, or intimidating someone, and/or spreading rumors about someone. (See Board Policy: 4.22 Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Prevention Policy)
- plagiarize others' work and present it as my own.
- access, delete, or change files created by other students, faculty, or staff without their permission.
- participate in any online for-profit activities.
- download and/or install software.
- unplug or change lab devices without permission.
- create or distribute malicious software.
- stream video for personal use while connected to district networks.
- connect personal devices to any network other than the guest wireless as outlined below.
- eat or drink while using any school computer.

Guest Wireless Access (HSD-Guest)

Helena Public Schools provides wireless network access to students, staff, and guests who wish to use their personal devices while in district owned facilities. The following will apply:

- All users must follow the Technology Use Agreement when using a personal device on HSD-Guest.
- HSD-Guest is a public network, and as such there should not be an expectation of privacy or secure communications and no guarantees of service.
- Users are responsible for maintaining up-to-date antivirus software, firewalls, etc. on their personal devices.
- Printing is not available on HSD-Guest. Only those district systems that are publicly accessible via the internet will be accessible using HSD-Guest.
- Helena Public Schools will not provide technical support for users' personal devices on HSD-Guest.

Consequences for Violating the Student Technology Use Agreement

Depending on the age of the student and the severity and frequency of the misuse or abuse, one or more of the following consequences will occur:

- The student will receive a warning that includes specific discussion of the infraction.
- The student will be referred to the principal/administrator for discussion of the infraction.
- The student's parent/guardian will be notified by phone, personal conference, or official discipline referral.
- For serious or repeated internet misuse/abuse, students may lose access to the internet. (The terms of this restriction will be determined by the administrator or school board policy.)
- For serious or repeated technology equipment misuse/abuse, students may lose access to district technology and may need to develop a plan for restitution. (The terms of this restriction will be determined by the administrator or school board policy.)
- In some cases, a referral to proper authorities for disciplinary and/or legal action may be required.

Note: Depending on the circumstances, students who have lost district system or internet privileges may not use personal devices in lieu of district devices.

Helena Public Schools Chromebook Use Agreement

In order to ensure our students have consistent access to digital learning opportunities, 9th grade through 12th grade students will be assigned a Chromebook that they will use at school and at home (devices for K-8th grade students will be kept at school in most cases). **The form below needs to be completed and returned yearly for each student in grades 9-12.** The pages that follow are for family information and do not need to be returned with the form.

Section 1: Opt-out of District Device

Parents may choose to provide their child with a device that meets district technology requirements (see page 2). By agreeing to provide a device, parents are agreeing to send the device with students to school for in-person instruction each day. Additionally, parents agree to ensure that the provided device has the necessary district software installed. (There is no charge for any of the required software.)

___ Initial here if you will provide your student's device. Continue to Section 3: Signatures.

Section 2: Optional Accidental Damage Waiver

Parents may pay \$15 per year to provide accidental damage protection for the district-provided device. In the event that the device is accidentally damaged or found to be defective, the district will provide a replacement device, subject to the limitations listed on page 3. If you opt out of this coverage, any damage to the device will be considered a fine and added to the student's fees, per the chart on page 4.

Payments can be made directly at <https://helenaschools.revtrak.net/>.

____ I accept the accidental damage waiver and will pay the \$15 fee.

____ I do not wish to elect coverage on my child's device. I understand that any costs associated with the repair or replacement of my child's device will be my sole responsibility.

Section 3: Parent and Student Signatures

By signing you are accepting responsibility for a device provided by the Helena Public Schools for use during the 2026-27 school year or, in the event that you are providing a device for this student to use, agreeing to the parameters listed above in Section 1. The student agrees to follow the district's Acceptable Use Policy and to follow the guidelines listed on pages 2-3 for the care and maintenance of their device.

_____ Student Name	_____ Student Signature	_____ Date
_____ Parent Name	_____ Parent Signature	_____ Date

Digital Learning Student Device Guide

The information in this document applies to all devices issued to students by the Helena Public Schools.

In order to run appropriate learning software, all devices must meet or exceed hardware requirements:

- Chromebook: 4GB RAM; 32GB SSD; 11 or 14" screen, camera, Chrome OS 81.0.4044.127
- Laptop: Core i3, 128GB SSD, 8GB RAM, 13" screen size, camera, Windows/MacOS
- iPad: current iPad or iPad Pro, 32GB storage, 9.7" display, iPad OS 13

Additionally, devices must have the following free software installed at all times:

- Microsoft Office 365 (Outlook, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, OneNote) <http://helenaschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Student-Office-365-Installation-Guide.pdf>
- Microsoft Teams <https://teams.microsoft.com/uswe-01/downloads>
- Google Chrome (Web Browser) <https://www.google.com/chrome/>

All devices must be able to connect to Wi-Fi networks, including HSD networks (HSD-Guest).

Parents and students must sign and return the Chromebook Use Agreement (page 1) each fall.

Student devices and chargers will be collected following 8th grade and 12th grade. Any student who transfers out of HSD will be required to return their device and charger. If a device and/or charger are not returned, the parent/guardian will be held responsible for payment in full. If payment is not received, the parent/guardian will be turned over to a collection agency.

The protective shell of the Chromebook only provides basic protection from everyday use. It is not designed to prevent damage from drops or abusive handling. We recommend a protective case be used when transporting the device. Cases are included for all devices provided by the Helena Public Schools.

All students are required to take their device home each night throughout the school year for charging.

DEVICES MUST BE BROUGHT TO SCHOOL EACH DAY IN A FULLY CHARGED

CONDITION. Chromebook batteries are designed to last throughout the day under average use. In the event that a device's battery is fully discharged at school, the student will be responsible for completing work with paper and pencil and transferring this work to a digital format as necessary outside of the school day.

District Chromebooks can be identified in the following ways:

- Service tag and serial number
- Individual's account username or device name

Under no circumstances are students to modify, remove, or destroy service tag labels. Parents/Students will be charged for full replacement cost of a device if the service tag is modified, removed, or destroyed.

Accidental Damage or Loss Protection Details

Helena Public Schools recommends the purchase of accidental damage protection prior to the deployment of the Chromebook to your student. Helena Public Schools will be the sole provider of this protection.

Under this accidental damage protection plan, the Chromebook is protected against accidental damage or loss due to an act of nature. The Helena Public Schools will require that a police report be submitted in cases of theft. Fraudulent reporting of theft will be turned over to the police for prosecution. A student making a false report will also be subject to disciplinary action as outlined by board policy.

This protection plan does not cover loss of the Chromebook and/or its accessories, cosmetic damage, or damage caused by intentional misuse and abuse. The Helena Public Schools will assess the Chromebook damage and repair or replace the device if the damage is determined to be accidental and within the protection guidelines.

The device should not be disassembled, nor should there be any attempt to repair it by anyone other than a school authorized vendor. The Helena Public Schools has the right to decide when a Chromebook should be repaired in house versus filing a claim with the manufacturer.

Students and parents will be charged for Chromebook damage that is a result of misuse or abusive handling. Parents will be billed for parts and labor. ***Parents/Students will be charged for full replacement cost of a device that has been damaged beyond repair due to intentional misuse or abuse.*** The full replacement cost is \$349.

Loaner Chromebooks may be issued to students when their Chromebooks are sent out for repair by the Technology Department. If repair is needed due to malicious damage, the school may refuse to provide a loaner Chromebook.

Estimated Parts Replacement Cost Table:

Part	Replacement Cost*	Accidental Damage	Intentional Damage
Display	\$100	Covered	Full Price
Keyboard Replacement	\$110	Covered	Full Price
Bottom Assembly	\$150	Covered	Full Price
Battery	\$60	Covered	Full Price

Bezel	\$80	Covered	Full Price
Trackpad	\$60	Covered	Full Price
AC Adaptor	\$25	Covered	Full Price

* Repair costs are estimates and can change.

Payment for the accident protection plan is due at the time this form is returned to the school. **If this form is returned without payment, your accident protection plan will not be active until payment is received.**

2026-2027 Device Use Agreement & School Policy Agreement

In this agreement, “Device” means iPad, Chromebook, or laptop and all of its components, software, apps, and charger.

TERMS: You will comply at all times with the Helena Public Schools Student Technology Use Agreement. Any failure to comply may terminate your rights of possession effective immediately, and the school may repossess the property. Devices are assigned to a single individual and are not to be shared.

TITLE: Legal title to the device is in the school district, and it shall remain in the school district. The student’s right of possession and use is limited to and conditioned upon full and complete compliance with this agreement and the mobile device guidelines.

LOSS OR DAMAGE: If the property is accidentally damaged or incurs loss due to an act of nature, Helena Public Schools will assess the device damage and repair or replace the device under the accidental damage or loss policy. If the property is stolen, a police report must be filed by the student or the parents/guardians of the student involved in the loss of property. Loss or theft of the property must be reported to the school by the next school day after the occurrence. Fraudulent reporting of theft will be turned over to the police for prosecution.

REPOSSESSION: Students not complying with all terms of this agreement, including the timely return of the property, will be declared to be in default, and authorities may be sent to your place of residence or other location of the device to take possession.

TERM OF AGREEMENT: Your right to use and possession of the property terminates upon student withdrawal from HSD.

APPROPRIATION: Your failure to timely return the property and the continued use of it for non-school purposes without the school’s consent will be considered unlawful appropriation of school property.

MICROSOFT OFFICE 365 AND OTHER EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS: The district provides access to Microsoft Office 365 for cloud-based storage. District issued emails are created for educational work and a collaborative online workspace. Students will have access to apps and web based programs on their device for educational purposes that have been authorized by the teacher and/or school. Parents agree to provide consent for the use of these programs that are provided limited student information such as Microsoft Office 365, district cloud storage and collaborative educational workspace. Helena Public Schools complies with Montana student data privacy regulations.

GUIDE TO AI CITATIONS FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

AI-generated information that is used as content in written work should be cited as if it were from a book, a

website, a historical document, a published chart, etc.

Guidelines

1. Even when changing the wording of the information through paraphrasing and summarizing, if you are not presenting your original thoughts, the material should be cited.
2. You should always check information generated by AI for accuracy before using it in your written work.
3. In some cases, it is necessary to cite both the AI-generated information as well as the source from which that content was generated.
4. There are numerous citation formats that can be utilized depending on your school's or organization's preferences, such as APA, MLA, and Chicago, so what is presented in a citation will vary by the citation style being used. The examples below are for APA and MLA as they are the most frequently used citation formats in Helena Public Schools.

Use Scenario	Examples (APA and MLA formats)
AI is used to write content. Example: ChatGPT is used to generate a list of the 5 most popular vehicles sold in the US in 1965.	<u>MLA</u> *in-text citation: (5 most popular vehicles) *works cited entry: "What were the 5 most popular vehicles sold in the United States in 1965?" prompt, ChatGPT, OpenAI, 17 Feb 2025, chatgpt.com. <u>APA</u> *in-text citation: (OpenAI, 2025) *reference list entry: OpenAI. (2025). <i>ChatGPT</i> (Feb 17 version) [Large language model]. https://chatgpt.com
AI is used to make text from a source easier to read/understand. Example: ChatGPT is used to summarize Act 1, Scene 1 of Shakespeare's <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> for students struggling to understand it.	This requires citation of the original source and the AI source. <u>MLA</u> *in-text citation: (Shakespeare 2-12) *works cited entry: Shakespeare, William. "Act 1, Scene 1." <i>Romeo and Juliet</i>. Simon Schuster & Co, 1995, pp. 2-12. Summarized with AI assistance using ChatGPT. "Summarize Act 1, Scene 1 of Shakespeare's <i>Romeo and Juliet</i>" prompt. <i>ChatGPT</i>, OpenAI, 17 Feb 2025, chatgpt.com. <u>APA</u> Shakespeare, W. (1995). Act 1, Scene 1. <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> (pp. 2-12). Simon Schuster & Co. Summarized with AI assistance using ChatGPT. Reviewed by Tammy Teacher, Helena Public Schools.

Sources:

"AI @ MTDA" Website <https://montanadigitalacademy.org/innovation/ai-at-mtda/>

"Generative AI Guidance for Teachers and Students," Great Falls Public Schools, Website https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1723835230/gfpsk12mtus/nxz7wvc4trkoq3s75fgl/08-16-2024_GFPS_GenerativeAIGuidanceforTeachersandStudents06-26-24.pdf

"AI A Framework for School Districts," Website <https://montanadigitalacademy.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/MTDA-Planning-Guide-for-AI-A-Framework-for-School-Districts-v1-20240213c.pdf>

9. ANNUAL ASBESTOS NOTIFICATION

In the past, asbestos was used extensively in building materials because of its insulating, sound absorbing, and fire retarding capabilities. All Helena School District buildings constructed before the late 1970s contain some level of asbestos. Intact and undisturbed asbestos materials generally do not pose a health risk. Asbestos materials, however, can become hazardous when, due to damage or deterioration over time, they release fibers. If the fibers are inhaled, they can lead to health problems, such as cancer and asbestosis.

In 1986, Congress passed the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) which requires schools to be inspected to identify any asbestos containing building materials. Suspected asbestos-containing building materials are located, sampled (or assumed) and rated according to condition and potential hazard. Every three years, Helena Public School District has conducted a reinspection to determine whether the condition of the known or assumed asbestos containing building materials (ACBM) has changed and to make recommendations on managing or removing the ACBM. At the last reinspection conducted during September 2020, all materials listed in the Management Plan as asbestos containing (or assumed to be asbestos containing) were inspected and recertified.

The law further requires an asbestos management plan to be in place by July 1989. Helena Public School District has developed a plan, as required, which has been continually updated. The plan has several ongoing requirements: publish a notification on management plan availability and the status of activities; educate and train its employees about asbestos and how to deal with it; notify short-term or temporary workers on the locations of the asbestos containing building materials; post warning labels in routine maintenance areas where asbestos was previously identified or assumed; follow set plans and procedures designed to minimize the disturbance of asbestos containing building materials; and survey the condition of these materials every six months to assure that they remain in good condition.

Since the Fall of 2016 asbestos containing building materials have been removed, encapsulated, or enclosed in the following buildings: Helena High School, Capital High School, C. R. Anderson Middle School, Helena Middle School, Hawthorne Elementary School, Rossiter Elementary School, Four Georgians Elementary School, Warren Elementary School, Broadwater Elementary School, Smith Elementary School,

Jefferson Elementary School, Kessler Elementary School, Lincoln School, old Central Elementary School, old Bryant Elementary School and old Jim Darcy Elementary School. During the next year, we plan to continue asbestos abatement across the District.

It is the intention of Helena Public School District to comply with all federal and state regulations controlling asbestos and to take whatever steps are necessary to ensure students and employees a healthy and safe environment in which to learn and work. You are welcome to review a copy of the asbestos management plan at the District Facility office at 1201 Boulder Ave during regular business hours. The Facilities Director is the District's designed asbestos program coordinator, and all inquiries regarding asbestos plan and asbestos-related issues should be directed to the Facilities Director at 324.1720.

10. VIDEOTAPING OF STUDENTS

The District has the right to use security and surveillance video cameras on District property to ensure the health, welfare, and safety of all staff, students, and visitors to District property, and to safeguard District facilities and equipment.

Video cameras may be used in locations as deemed appropriate by the Superintendent. Students may be

videod at events and practices open to the public, including but not limited to public performances, dress rehearsals, athletic practices open to the public, and athletic competitions.

Students in violation of Board policies, administrative regulations, building rules, or law shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. Others may be referred to law enforcement agencies.

Video recordings from security and surveillance cameras may become a part of a student's educational record. The District shall comply with all applicable state and federal laws related to record maintenance and retention. Signs will be posted at various locations to inform students, staff, and members of the public that video surveillance cameras are in use.

The District will seek consent before recording students individually in the classroom.

11. VISITORS TO THE SCHOOLS

The District encourages visits to all District buildings by Board members, parents, citizens, and taxpayers at appropriate times within the discretion of building administration.

All visitors shall check-in at the school's main office for purposes of safety, security, and assistance.

If a conference with a teacher is desired the District requests that an appointment be made in advance. Conferences with teachers need to be scheduled outside school hours or during the teacher's preparation period. [See: Board Policy 4020 – Visitors to the Schools](#)

12. VOLUNTEERS

Parent, Student, Community and School Engagement

The Helena Board of Trustees and employees believe that meaningful engagement of students, parents, families and the community in our schools contributes to the success of all students. The Helena Board of Trustees and employees further believe that sustained engagement throughout all levels of school ensures a lasting and positive impact on lifelong student achievement and attitudes about learning.

The Helena School District commits to building partnerships by conducting outreach, supporting multi-directional communications, encouraging participation in each school's improvement planning process, and creating opportunities to volunteer and collaborate at all levels in support of student achievement. (See Volunteer Registration Form in this section.)

Helena Middle School encourages parents to consider volunteering. If you are interested please duplicate the Volunteer Registration Form and return it to the principal.



Volunteer Form

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Home Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

Available Start date: _____ Certified in First Aid/CPR? YES NO

Emergency Contact (Name, Relation, Phone): _____

1.) Grade Preference(s) (circle all that apply):

PRIMARY (K-3)	INTERMEDIATE (4-5)	MIDDLE (6-8)	HS (9-12)
Broadwater	Bryant Central Kessler	Helena Middle	Capital High
Four Georgians	Hawthorne Jefferson	CRA Middle	Helena High
Jim Darcy	Rossiter Smith Warren		PAL

2.) Area(s) of Interest (circle all that apply):

Classroom/small group assistance	Mentoring	Tutoring	Special Events	Sporting Events
Speech/Debate	Guest Speaker	Music	Clerical	Parent Council
Peak/Gifted & Talented				

3.) Experience: Please list any previous paid/volunteer experience with students.

4.) Availability (check all that apply):

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Before School							
Morning							
Lunch							
Afternoon							
After School							
Special Events							

5.) Child/Children's Name/School/Classroom (if applicable):

Name: _____ School: _____ Classroom: _____

Name: _____ School: _____ Classroom: _____

Name: _____ School: _____ Classroom: _____



Volunteer Form

Name: _____

All volunteers who have *unsupervised access* to District students on District property or at a District sanctioned event will be required to submit to a comprehensive criminal background check, which will include a fingerprint-based background check. Volunteers will not be able to serve until the District has received and approved the results of the criminal background check.

The District may, at its discretion, conduct a name based background check.

Volunteers have the responsibility to notify the District as soon as possible if they are arrested, charged with a crime, or served a restraining order. The District will take appropriate action if it is determined the activity impacts the ability to volunteer.

For additional information, please refer to Board Policy 5122 Criminal Background Investigation

Please answer:

Have you ever pleaded guilty to, or have you ever been convicted of any violation of criminal law, including criminal convictions resulting from a deferred sentence or a plea of nolo contendere/no contest (minor traffic offenses exempted)?

_____ Yes _____ No Answering 'yes' may not prevent approval. All circumstances will be considered.

If yes, describe in full (attach additional sheets if necessary) and contact the HR department at humanresources@helenaschools.org or call (406) 324.2010

I understand I will be acting as a volunteer with K-12 students and know of no reason why I should not act in this capacity. I agree to fulfill the volunteer responsibilities outlined in the HPS Volunteer Handbook.

I affirm the information I have provided is accurate.

Signature

Date

To be completed by School Personnel

School Contact will be: _____

Background Check For Unsupervised Access Required: _____yes (notify HR) _____ no

Date notified by HR background cleared _____

Background check valid for five (5) years

**2026-2027 Helena Public School Parent
Permission Form 6-8 Middle School Students**

Student Name: _____ Grade: _____

This form will be signed and will be in effect for the 2026-2027 academic year in the Helena School District. If at any time you would like to make changes, please contact your child's school.

Parents: Please read the handbook information related to the topics below before completing this form. Once you have read the information provided, please mark your choices, sign the form, and return to the school.

- ____ Yes ____ No I have read, understand, and give permission for my child to attend and participate in field trips.
- ____ Yes ____ No I have read and understand the information regarding weapons in school.
- ____ Yes ____ No I have read and understand the Technology Use Agreement, and I give permission for my child to use the internet and the Microsoft Office 365 collaboration tools to include email access.
- ____ Yes ____ No I have read and understand the policy regarding cell phones, smart watches, tablets, and other devices with access to online applications and resources.
- ____ Yes ____ No I give permission for photographs and/or filming by the news media or the school district.
- ____ Yes ____ No I give permission for my child's work to be published on the district and/or school web site and other district/school social media sites.
- ____ Yes ____ No I give permission for my child's name to be published on the district and/or school web site and other district/school social media sites.
- ____ Yes ____ No I give permission for my child's picture to be published on the district and/or school web site, other district/school social media sites, or in the school yearbook if applicable.
- ____ Yes ____ No I give permission for the release of directory information as defined by FERPA. Directory information includes name, address, telephone number, gender, grade level, birth date & place, parent/guardian name and address, academic awards or honors, student photograph, school activities and period of school attendance.
- ____ Yes ____ No The district has identified web-based tools and applications for learning. A complete list can be found on the district web site (helenaschools.org). Some tools require the student's **school** email address and name prior to approval for use. If you object to your child's use of approved web sites, please indicate by checking NO to the left.
- ____ Yes ____ No I have read and understand the 2026-2027 Student/Parent Handbook.

Parent Signature

Date

Appendix E –Authorization to Participate in Club or Activity

The District offers student clubs and extracurricular activities, events, and programs for students, including, but not limited to, curricular and co-curricular programs and clubs, sporting events, activities, band, etc. as identified in this handbook.

The passage of a law in the 2023 Legislative session requires that parents/guardians must provide written permission for a student to participate in a school club or activity. By signing this form, you give permission for your child to participate in the Club(s) and Activity(ies) identified by you and:

- Represent the student is fully capable of participating in the Club/Activity or Clubs/Activities and agree to disclose all known limitations to the District, including, but not limited to; medical conditions, physical limitations, and any other limitation known to the Student or the Parents.
- Understand and acknowledge that the student is subject to all eligibility requirements adopted by the District for participation;
- Understand and acknowledge that engaging in any Activity may require a degree of skill and knowledge which the student may not possess;
- Understand and acknowledge that the Club or Activity in which the student seeks to participate may require an audition or try-out to determine if the student has the required skills/abilities to participate and that the Student may be “cut” from the Club or Activity through the audition/try-out process;
- Understand and acknowledge that engaging in any Activity may require a participant to listen to any instructions, warnings, or risk assessments of the District, to ask for instruction or clarification whenever needed, and to follow instructions; and
- Understand and acknowledge that the District may remove the student from a club or activity for any breach of safety policies, or any conduct that the District deems unsafe.

By signing this Agreement, the Student and Parents acknowledge they have carefully read and understand its contents and the parent/guardian agrees to allow the student to participate.

Club(s) and/or Activity(ies) for which permission is given for the student to participate are listed below:

STUDENT NAME STUDENT SIGNATURE

DATE

NAME OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN PARENT OR GUARDIAN SIGNATURE

DATE

Please return form to: your school office prior to the first day of the activity or club meeting. Signed permission must be provided before a student can participate in a Club or Activity.

MONDAY ONLY

2026-2027

Helena Middle School

6th Grade

Period 1	8:05	8:51	
Period 2	8:55	9:41	
Period 3	9:45	10:31	
Period 4	10:35	11:21	
Period 5	11:25	12:11	
Lunch	12:11	12:31	
Recess	12:31	12:51	
Period 6	12:55	1:41	
Period 7	1:45	2:05	Advisor

MONDAY ONLY

2026-2027

Helena Middle School

7th & 8th Grade

Period 1	8:05	8:51	
Period 2	8:55	9:41	
Period 3	9:45	10:31	
Period 4	10:35	11:21	
Lunch 8 th grade	11:21	11:41	Recess 7 th grade
Lunch 7 th grade	11:41	12:01	Recess 8 th grade
Period 5	12:05	12:51	
Period 6	12:55	1:41	
Period 7	1:45	2:05	Advisor

Tuesday-Friday

2026-2027

Helena Middle School

6th Grade



Period 1	8:05	8:56	
Period 2	9:00	9:54	
Period 3	9:58	10:49	
Period 4	10:53	11:44	
Lunch	11:44	12:04	
Recess	12:04	12:24	
Period 5	12:28	1:19	
Period 6	1:23	2:14	
Period 7	2:18	2:50	Advisor

Tuesday-Friday

2026-2027

Helena Middle School

7th & 8th Grade



Period 1	8:05	8:56	
Period 2	9:00	9:54	
Period 3	9:58	10:49	
Lunch 8 th grade	10:49	11:09	Recess 7 th grade
Lunch 7 th grade	11:09	11:29	Recess 8 th grade
Period 4	11:33	12:24	
Period 5	12:28	1:19	
Period 6	1:23	2:14	
Period 7	2:18	2:50	Advisor

2026 - 2027 - 1st Semester											
MONTH	DATE	DAY	ACTIVITY	MONTH	DATE	DAY	ACTIVITY				
AUGUST	****				WED	4	A				
	MON	24	N/S 6th Grade Meet and Greet		THU	5	B				
	TUE	25	N/S		FRI	6	B				
	WED	26	A FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL/GR 6	NOVEMBER	****						
	THU	27	B FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL/GR 7&8		MON	9	A EARLY RELEASE 2:05 PM				
	FRI	28	A		TUE	10	B				
	****				WED	11	A				
AUGUST	MON	31	A EARLY RELEASE 2:05PM		THU	12	B BAND CONCERT 7/8/JAZZ 6PM				
SEPTEMB	TUE	1	B		FRI	13	A				
	WED	2	A 7/8 Grade Open House @7pm	NOVEMBER	****						
	THU	3	B		MON	16	A EARLY RELEASE 2:05 PM				
	FRI	4	B		TUE	17	B P/T CONFERENCES				
SEPTEMB	****				WED	18	A				
	MON	7	A NO SCHOOL - LABOR DAY		THU	19	B P/T CONFERENCES				
	TUE	8	B		FRI	20	B				
	WED	9	A	NOVEMBER	****						
	THU	10	B		MON	23	A EARLY RELEASE 2:05 PM				
	FRI	11	A Picture Day		TUE	24	B				
SEPTEMB	****				WED	25	N/S THANKSGIVING BREAK				
	MON	14	A EARLY RELEASE 2:05 PM		THU	26	N/S THANKSGIVING BREAK				
	TUE	15	B		FRI	27	N/S THANKSGIVING BREAK				
	WED	16	A		****						
	THU	17	B Great Beginnings Orch 6-7pm	NOVEMBER	MON	30	A EARLY RELEASE 2:05 PM				
	FRI	18	B	DECEMBER	TUE	1	B				
SEPTEMB	****				WED	2	A				
	MON	21	A EARLY RELEASE 2:05 PM		THU	3	B HMS CHOIR CONCERT 6/7/8 6pm				
	TUE	22	B		FRI	4	A				
	WED	23	A	DECEMBER	****						
	THU	24	B		MON	7	A EARLY RELEASE 2:05 PM				
	FRI	25	A		TUE	8	B MIDTERM 2ND QTR				
SEPTEMB	****				WED	9	A				
	MON	28	A EARLY RELEASE 2:05 PM		THU	10	B BAND CONCERT 6TH GRADE 6PM				
	TUE	29	B		FRI	11	B Choir (8th) Capital Rotunda Concert				
	WED	30	A	DECEMBER	****						
OCTOBER	THU	1	B		MON	14	A EARLY RELEASE 2:05 PM				
	FRI	2	B		TUE	15	B				
OCTOBER	****				WED	16	A				
	MON	5	A EARLY RELEASE 2:05 PM		THU	17	B				
	TUE	6	B		FRI	18	A Choir - Community Caroling				
	WED	7	A	DECEMBER	****						
	THU	8	B		MON	21/28	N/S DEC. 21-JAN. 1- WINTER BREAK				
	FRI	9	A		TUE	22/29	N/S				
OCTOBER	****				WED	23/30	N/S				
	MON	12	A EARLY RELEASE 2:05 PM		THU	24/31	N/S				
	TUE	13	B		FRI	25/1	N/S				
	WED	14	A	JANUARY	****						
	THU	15	N/S NO SCHOOL Educator Conferences		MON	4	A EARLY RELEASE 2:05 PM				
	FRI	16	N/S NO SCHOOL Educator Conferences		TUE	5	B				
OCTOBER	****				WED	6	A				
	MON	19	A EARLY RELEASE 2:05 PM		THU	7	B				
	TUE	20	B		FRI	8	B				
	WED	21	A	JANUARY	****						
	THU	22	B		MON	11	A EARLY RELEASE 2:05 PM				
	FRI	23	B		TUE	12	B				
OCTOBER	****				WED	13	A				
	MON	26	A EARLY RELEASE 2:05 PM		THU	14	B				
	TUE	27	B		FRI	15	A				
	WED	28	A	JANUARY	****						
	THU	29	B PICTURE RETAKES		MON	18	N/S NO SCHOOL--MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY				
	FRI	30	A		TUE	19	B				
NOVEMBER	****				WED	20	A				
	MON	2	A 2 nd QTR BEGINS/EARLY RELEASE 2:05 PM		THU	21	B				
	TUE	3	B		FRI	22	B 12P DISMISS-STAFF REC-LAST DAY 2ND QTR				

2 ND SEMESTER									
MONTH	DATE	DAY	ACTIVITY	MONTH	DATE	DAY	ACTIVITY		
JANUARY	*****			APRIL	****				
	MON	25	N/S NO SCHOOL - RECORDS DAY		MON	5	A 4th QUARTER BEGINS/EARLY RELEASE 2:05 PM		
	TUE	26	B QUARTER 3 BEGINS		TUE	6	B 5TH Grade Extravaganza		
	WED	27	A		WED	7	A		
	THU	28	B		THU	8	B		
	FRI	29	A BobPak Assembly		FRI	9	B		
FEBRUAR	*****			APRIL	*****				
	MON	1	A EARLY RELEASE 2:05 PM		MON	12	A EARLY RELEASE 2:05 PM		
	TUE	2	B		TUE	13	B 5th Grade Parent Night 6PM		
	WED	3	A		WED	14	A		
	THU	4	B		THU	15	B		
	FRI	5	B 8TH GRADE SKI DAY		FRI	16	A		
FEBURAR	*****			APRIL	*****				
	MON	8	A EARLY RELEASE 2:05 PM		MON	19	A EARLY RELEASE 2:05 PM		
	TUE	9	B		TUE	20	B		
	WED	10	A P/T CONFERENCES		WED	21	A		
	THU	11	B P/T CONFERENCES		THU	22	B		
	FRI	12	A		FRI	23	B 6/7 Orchestra Festival - Our Redeemer's		
FEBRUAR	*****			APRIL	*****				
	MON	15	N/S NO SCHOOL--PRESIDENTS' DAY		MON	26	A EARLY RELEASE 2:05 PM		
	TUE	16	B		TUE	27	B		
	WED	17	A 6TH GRADE SKI DAY		WED	28	A		
	THU	18	B 6TH GRADE SKI DAY		THU	29	B		
	FRI	19	B		FRI	30	A		
FEBRUAR	*****			MAY	*****				
	MON	22	A EARLY RELEASE 2:05 PM		MON	3	A EARLY RELEASE 2:05 PM		
	TUE	23	B		TUE	4	B		
	WED	24	A MIDTERM 3RD QTR/7TH SKI DAY		WED	5	A MIDTERM 4TH QTR		
	THU	25	B 7TH GRADE SKI DAY		THU	6	B		
	FRI	26	A		FRI	7	B VIGILANTE DAY EARLY RELEASE AT 11AM		
MARCH	*****			MAY	*****				
	MON	1	A EARLY RELEASE 2:05 PM		MON	10	A EARLY RELEASE 2:05 PM		
	TUE	2	B		TUE	11	B		
	WED	3	A		WED	12	A		
	THU	4	B 8th/9th Orchestra Festival 6pm		THU	13	B 6/7 Choir Concert (day time TBD)		
	FRI	5	B		FRI	14	A SERVICE DAY		
MARCH	*****			MAY	*****				
	MON	8	A EARLY RELEASE 2:05 PM		MON	17	A EARLY RELEASE 2:05 PM		
	TUE	9	B 8th Grade Choir Fest		TUE	18	B HMS FAMILY/COMMUNITY BBQ		
	WED	10	A 7th Grade Band Festival - Civic Center		WED	19	A		
	THU	11	B 6/7 Orchestra Festival		THU	20	B Band Concert 6th@6pm, 7/8@7pm		
	FRI	12	A		FRI	21	B		
MARCH	*****			MAY	*****				
	MON	15	A EARLY RELEASE 2:05 PM		MON	24	A		
	TUE	16	B 8th/9th Combined concert at HHS gym 7pm		TUES	25	B		
	WED	17	A		WED	26	A		
	THU	18	B		THU	27	B HMS Orchestra (all) Concert 6pm		
	FRI	19	B		FRI	28	N/S No School - Snow Day		
MARCH	****				****				
	MON	22	A EARLY RELEASE 2:05PM		MAY	MON	31	N/S NO SCHOOL - MEMORIAL DAY	
	TUES	23	B		JUNE	TUES	1	B	
	WED	24	A			WED	2	A 8th Grade Choir Concert 6pm	
	THUR	25	B			THUR	3	B BOBPAK ASSEMBLY	
	FRI	26	A LAST DAY OF QUARTER 3			FRI	4	A	
MARCH	*****				****				
	MON	29	N/S March 29 - April 2 SPRING BREAK		JUNE	MON	7	A	
	TUE	30	N/S			TUES	8	B	
	WED	31	N/S			WED	9	A LAST DAY SCHOOL/12PM DISMISSAL	
APRIL	THU	1	N/S			THU	10	N/S	
	FRI	2	N/S			FRI	11	N/S	

2026-2027



District Calendar

Holiday and Student Dismissal Dates

August 24 & 25	Staff Orientation
August 26	First Day of School for Grs 1-5, Gr 6 CRA & HMS, Grs 9-12 PAL, Gr 9 CHS & HHS
August 27	First Day of School for Grs 7-8 CRA & HMS, Grs 10-12 CHS & HHS
August 31	First Day of School for Kindergarten & KinderSprouts*
September 7	Labor Day - No School - District Closed
October 15 & 16	Educator Conferences-No School
November 2	2nd Quarter Begins: Grades 6-12
November 25-27	Thanksgiving Break - No School
November 26 & 27	District Closed
November 30	Trimester 2 Begins: Grades K-5
December 4	12:00 P.M. Grades K-5 Student Early Dismissal
December 4	Grades 6-12: Full Day of School
December 4	P.M. K-5 Staff Records Day
December 21 - January 1	Winter Break-No School
December 24, 25 & January 1	District Closed
January 18	Martin Luther King Jr. Day - No School - District Closed
January 20, 21, 22	High School Semester Testing
January 22	Grades K-5: Full Day of School
January 22	12:00 P.M. Grades 6-8 Early Dismissal
January 22	P.M. 6-8 Staff Records Day
January 25	No School K-12, HS Staff In-Service & Records Day
January 26	3rd Quarter Begins: Grades 6-12
February 15	President's Day - No School - District Closed
March 15	Trimester 3 Begins: Grades K-5
March 29- April 2	Spring Break - No School
April 5	4th Quarter Begins: Grades 6-12
May 7	Vigilante Day - No School Grades 9-12 / 11:00 AM Dismissal K-8
May 28	No School: Snow Day make-up day if needed
May 31	Memorial Day - No School - District Closed
June 5	High School Graduation
June 7, 8, 9	High School Semester Testing
June 9	Last Day & 12:00 p.m. Early Dismissal Students K-8
June 9	Last Day for Students 9-12
June 9	P.M. K-8 Staff Records Day: Last Day for Staff K-8
June 10	HS Staff In-Service-Records Day: Last Day for Staff 9-12

Mondays are Professional Release days for Helena School District staff. School for students will dismiss early. Please see below.

- Elementary School Student day ends 45 minutes early
- Middle School Student day ends 45 minutes early
- High School Student day ends 45 minutes early

* KinderSprouts attend the same days as Kindergarten

First Day of School for Various Grade Levels

- Holiday or Break - No School-All Grades
- Staff Orientation
- Last Day of School 9-12 Students
- High School Semester Testing
- Early Dismissal Students K-5 ONLY/ Half Day K-5 Records
- Day Early Dismissal Students 6-8/ Half Day 6-8 Records Day
- Early Dismissal Students K-8/ Half Day K-8 Records Day
- HS Staff In-Service/Records Day - No School K-12
- Vigilante Day - K-8 Released 11:00 AM / HS No School

July 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

August 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

September 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

October 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

November 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

December 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

January 2027

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

February 2027

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

March 2027

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

April 2027

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

May 2027

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

June 2027

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Trustees Approved
2/10/2026

Helena Public Schools

Bell Schedules for 2026-2027

**Mondays are Early Release for Students and
Professional Collaboration time for Staff**

2026-2027 Monday Student Schedule

<u>Monday</u>	<u>Start Time</u>	<u>End Time</u>
Elementary	8:30 a.m.	2:30 p.m.
Middle School	8:05 a.m.	2:05 p.m.
High School	8:20 a.m.*	2:30 p.m.**

*First period begins.

**Seventh period ends.

Zero period starts at 7:32 a.m. on Monday.



2026-2027 Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday Student Schedule

<u>Tu, Wed, Th, F</u>	<u>Start Time</u>	<u>End Time</u>
Elementary	8:30 a.m.	3:15 p.m.
Middle School	8:05 a.m.	2:50 p.m.
High School*	8:20 a.m.*	3:15 p.m.*

*First period begins.

**Seventh period ends.

Zero Period Starts at 7:25 AM on Tu, W, Th, F

