

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
EAST HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 9**

CALL TO ORDER: Trustees of School District 9 held a meeting on June 10, 2024.
Chairman Walter called the meeting to order at 5:33 pm

Pledge of Allegiance

Attendance: East Helena Public Schools Board Chair Scott Walter, Vice Chair Tyrel Murfitt, Trustees: Marcia Ellermeyer, Martin Balukas, Stacy Baird and Tristan Ulmer.

Superintendent Dan Rispens, Information Systems Director Brandon Hansen, AD/Transportation/Facility Use Director Shaun Murgel and District Secretary, Jen Cordell.

Principals/Vice Principals: Brandon Crusat, Gus Somerfeld, Lynsi Morris, Michael Kemper, Brian Kessler, Duane Schlabach and Trish Klock.

Visitors: Cole Bass, Karly Olson, Victoria Curtiss, Jan Cookson, Nikki Rogers, Stu Rogers, Robert Wheeler, Cary Wheeler, Troy Wheeler, Matt MacDonald, Mandy Sammons, Melissa MacDonald, Andrea Fitch, Corey Cameron, Chris Edmunds, Mindy Schubert, Juliet Hahn, Stacy Baird and Christopher Baird.

Review the Agenda:
No Comments

Hear the Public:

Vicki Curtiss spoke to the Board about the boiler at EHHS that had been turned off after spring break. She said that the building was cold and uncomfortable for the rest of the school year and requested that the boilers be kept on until the end of the school year in the future. Brian Kessler also attested that the building was chilly during this time.

Nicole Rodgers addressed the Board to advocate for her daughter, Mariah (Stu) Rogers. She spoke of her daughter being sexually harassed by a teacher at EVMS. Nicole told the Board of her frustrations in the way the issue is being handled.

Stu Rogers spoke to the Board about being uncomfortable at school because of this teacher. She also spoke of her frustrations and concerns seeing this teacher every day and having to move her class schedule to avoid the teacher.

Administrator Reports:

Principal Crusat spoke of the staff training opportunities the last couple of days. He also expressed his gratitude for the last 4 years and the opportunity to work in the East Helena School District. He spoke of the goals set for the next school year. He also informed the Board on the wrap up of the current school year including the field trips and fun activities for the students. This week, the playground has been a project and he is excited for the sod installation and a better layout of the playground equipment.

Principal Somerfeld went over his Board report and wanted to point out a slight shortfall of the high goals set for the year. He elaborated on the fact that the staff will be in a better position to continue the momentum next fall and anticipates continued growth academically. Spring events have kept everyone busy. He spoke of a group of 5th graders approaching him with an idea and presentation requesting a graduation celebration. The PTO and parent volunteers helped with providing a pizza party and a day at the park to celebrate the 5th graders' end of elementary school and moving on to middle school.

Principal Morris reported to the Board on all of the 8th grade celebration festivities. The 6th and 7th grade homerooms also held fun olympic competitions. She added there may have been too many fun days and will probably cut back next year. EVMS has 2 more teaching positions to fill for the 24-25 school year. Summer school begins on Wednesday.

Vice Principal Kemper reported on the behavior referral numbers and their decline in the last month. He said that the Admin team was feeling good about the 8th graders moving on to the high school. He informed the Board about the MTSS in Bozeman this summer and is hopeful the training will be helpful for staff in further developing school wide protocols.

Principal Kessler spoke about graduation. He said it was a very exciting event and having a former East Helena student as the guest speaker, made the event even more special. He hopes that will become a tradition. He reported 95 seniors walked in the graduation ceremony and the numbers of seniors will continue to grow. He said it was a great all around last few weeks and wrap up for the school year. Summer school begins soon and the teachers and staff are prepared with core content for the students. Principal Kessler thanked the Board for taking a chance on him to develop and grow East Helena High and he is hopeful it will continue to grow and flourish.

Trustee Ulmer thanked Brian for his hard work and told him he would be missed.

Vice Principal Schlabach shared his Board report. He said that the staff are buying into the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) approach and it is helping with behavior and referrals.

Trustee Baird asked about student harassment issues and Vice Principal Schlabach explained that by talking with parents and putting a contract in place, 80 percent of the issues do not escalate after that.

Chairman Walter addressed both Principal Kessler and Vice Principal Schlabach and told them both they will be missed and they placed their stamp on EHHS, wishing them the best of success for their future.

AD/Transportation/Facility Use Director Shaun Murgel addressed the Board reporting on the start of summer activities in the District. Parent information night is set for mid August and the Google Bus will be back in operation soon.

For all of the help with communication with facility use, Mr. Murgel thanked Brandon Hansen, Oliver Atkinson and Janie Taylor. He explained how they tied the sports schedule with the District website. Mr. Murgel reported on the new high school trap club and that they placed 3rd in the State competition. There are a lot of activities available for kids and he also spoke about Girls Flag Football and the grant provided by the Georgia Falcons and all that entails. In 2028 Girls Flag Football will become an Olympic Event. Trustee Baird asked about the funding

available going forward and Mr. Murgel explained the Grant and fundraising opportunities like the other high school clubs.

Information Systems Director Brandon Hansen, reported to the Board that there are not as many projects this summer as last. There are still State reports to certify and our current website, Blackboard, has been bought. He was able to keep the original deal we had with Blackboard and signed a 5 year contract at the same cost. When the 24-25 school year begins, we will have a new website and a new domain.

Trustee and Committee Reports of the K – 12 Board

Chairman Walter solicited reports from the Trustees and Committees

Chairman Walter reported that at the MTSBA General Assembly, there was not a quorum so next month they will hold a vote. There were good trainings presented at the Assembly and the Association advocates for school funding. There will be more discussions in the future and a reevaluation of the State funding mechanism. The direction of the discussions is to look into less reliance on the ANB (Average Number Belonging) funding and more on quality educator and basic entitlement funding. Chairman Walter will take part in the Education Committee discussions next week.

No other reports from the Trustees

Strategic Planning- Scan for Future Needs

Chairman Walter solicited comments and observations regarding the current strategic plan and future needs.

Chairman Walter reported that as part of the collective bargaining agreement, the District will work towards reducing the workload on the special education teachers and place that as a visionary goal for the future. This issue will be addressed at the beginning of the school year when the Board has teacher input to proceed.

Notifications of Retirements and Resignations

The following resignations have been accepted:

- Ember McCall -EVMS Secretary
- Brian Kessler -EHHS Principal
- Heather Countryman -Tiger Program Administrator
- Sarah Elliott -EHHS Teacher
- Teri Valvoda -Tutor

CONSENT ACTION ITEMS

Motion by Trustee Ellermeyer to remove the Minutes from May 17, 2024 as they were not listed on the Agenda and pull Personnel Actions and consider them separately.

Seconded by Trustee Baird

Unanimous Vote

Motion Carries

Minutes of Regular Meeting May 13, 2024

Approval of Former & New Warrants (Claims #49938-50044) and (Payroll # -)

Personnel Actions

Motion by Trustee Murfitt to approve personnel actions as presented.

Seconded by Trustee Baird

Chairman Walter opened discussion to the public; added this is an item only, nothing of a personal nature.

No one addressed the Board

Motion Carries

Recommendation of Employment:

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------------|
| • Shelby Holmes | -EHHS Summer School Teacher |
| • Christa Schoenfeld | -EHHS Summer School Teacher |
| • Natasha Norman | -Paraprofessional |
| • Karly Olson | -Tiger Program Administrator |
| • Alexis Cooney | -EVMS Social Studies |
| • Leah Frederick | -Paraprofessional |
| • Alicia Menius | -Instructional Tutor |
| • Cason Gregg | -Custodian |
| • Perry Garner | -Summer Custodian |
| • Dave Gamble | -Summer Custodian |
| • Rainier Murgel | -Summer Custodian |
| • Rylie Schoenfeld | -Summer Custodian |
| • Rori Schoenfeld | -Summer Custodian |
| • Cole Jones | -Summer Custodian |
| • Ella Emmons | -Summer Custodian |
| • Bethany Kalous | -Summer Custodian |
| • Kyle Yearly | -Summer Custodian |
| • Stormi Lucero | -Summer Custodian |
| • Se'amus Diggins | -Summer Custodian |
| • Alex Reid | -Assistant Football Coach |
| • Paul Condon | -EHHS Principal |
| • Trish Klock | -EHHS Vice-Principal |
| • Kaydee Strum | -Summer Foods Program |
| • Joe Guerin | -Summer Foods Program |
| • Renee Slocum | -Summer Foods Program |
| • Caleb Wallis | -ELA-EVMS |
| • Olivia Brus | -Special Education |
| • Duncan Kraft | -EVMS Social Studies |

Surrounding School District Student Enrollment Approval:

D. East Helena School District Students Requesting Enrollment in Other School Districts for the 2023 -2024 School Year:

	<u>Helena</u>	<u>Jefferson High</u>
9th	1	1
10th	1	1
11th	1	1
12th	1	

East Helena School District Students Requesting Enrollment in Other School Districts for the 2024 -2025 School Year:

	<u>Helena</u>	<u>Jefferson High</u>	<u>Montana City</u>
MM (PreK)			5 (Also 5 Denied)
1st			3
2nd			1
3rd			1
4th			2
5th			2
6th	1		1
7th			1
8th			2
9th			
10th	1		

Unfinished Business:

Non-resident Student Application Consideration - Grades 6-7-8

Superintendent Rispens explained the delay in approval. The District was waiting to see if the budget allowed hiring a teacher for EVMS Business.

Motion by Vice Chair Murfitt to approve the non resident applications in 6th, 7th and 8th grade as presented. Seconded by Trustee Ellermeyer

Unanimous Vote

Motion Carries

Robert Wheeler addressed the Board to thank them for allowing continued enrollment as an out of district family. He said that his son is excited about the FFA program.

Charter School Update and Staffing Plan Review

The Superintendent shared information regarding the charter opening process and anticipated staffing needs to open in the fall of 2024. The original staffing plan from our application is in the supporting documents. As of May 31, everything is in order according to OPI. The District still has not received the funding documents. Even though the District has verbal approval, we are waiting to see the full funding amount. There are questions about the middle school portion and Superintendent Rispens will hold a meeting tomorrow to talk strategy. Dedicated staff are needed to run the school. Superintendent Rispens is asking for Board Action to move forward with a staffing plan as funding allows.

Motion by Trustee Balukas to authorize the Superintendent to fill positions at the 227 as funding allows. Seconded by Trustee Ellermeyer

Unanimous Vote

Motion Carries

Board Committee Appointments

Chairman Walter Appointed the Trustees to the following Committees:

Infrastructure & Transportation: Tyrel Murfitt; Marcia Ellermeyer; Scott Walter

Bargaining-Certified: mark Diehl; Marcia Ellermeyer; Scott Walter

Bargaining-Classified: Stacy Baird; Mark Diehl; Tyrel Murfitt

Budget, Personnel & Policy: Martin Balukas; Marcia Ellermeyer; Tristan Ulmer

Policy Review & Oversight: Stacy Baird; Martin Balukas; Tyrel Murfitt

Curriculum Development: Martin Balukas; Tyrel Murfitt; Tristan Ulmer

Representatives to the Long Term Infrastructure Committee: Stacy Baird; Scott Walter

Representatives to the Long Term Facilities Committee: Stacy Baird; Tyrel Murfitt; Scott Walter

Representatives to the Staff Professional Development Committee: Tristan Ulmer; Scott Walter

Representatives to the School Calendar Committee: Stacy Baird; Martin Balukas

NEW BUSINESS

After School TIGER Program Report

Karly Olson shared information about the program's successes and challenges this past year. Heather Countryman, the previous Tiger Program Administrator, put together a report for the School Board. Karly explained the programs offered at the sites, Eastgate and Radley Elementary. The Program is open to all K through 8 students. Karly gave examples of family engagement nights and hopes to incorporate more in the future. She is hoping for more Community involvement to extend the Program after the Grant runs out. Karly answered questions from the Board on the application process and limits.

Superintendent Rispens spoke about his appreciation of Karly's willingness to take over the program and continue to build it.

Out of State Travel Request EHHS Band

Superintendent Rispens introduced EHHS Band Director, Cole Bass.

Cole spoke to the Board about the opportunity to go to Washington, D.C with the high school band next year. He spoke about the activities and performances they would attend and be a part of. He also talked about a previous trip and what a great opportunity it is for the kids.

Mr. Bass added how much he also enjoys the trips and the opportunity for him to get to know his students better.

The Trustees asked about the fees associated with the trip and the timeline for families to pay. Mr. Bass explained the process and timeline for the 30-35 students participating.

Motion by Trustee Ulmer to approve the out of State travel request as presented.

Seconded by Trustee Ellermeyer

Trustee Balukas thanked Mr. Bass for the great opportunity for the kids.

Unanimous Vote

Motion Carries

Summer School Program Update

Principal Somerfeld spoke about the Summer Pals Program that EHPS has had in place for over 10 to 20 years. He said it is a well oiled machine that has been pretty similar in structure with 120 students and referrals continues to grow. The staff prioritize at-risk students but also want to infuse some summer fun for students who might not get an opportunity otherwise.

Field trips to MT Wild, Grant- Kohrs Ranch and visiting Historical Downtown Helena are just a few of the activities planned.

Notice of Award - EPA CSB Rebate

This is the program the Board approved last winter. We were notified last week that our request was approved for \$1,035,000 for 3 additional Lion Electric Buses. Superintendent Rispens explained this grant and how it will supply us with new electric buses. He said the specs we need on the buses are more expensive and we are waiting to see how much more they will cost. By law, side impact testing is something that needs to be done on the new buses and that should be completed and approved soon.

Lion electric writes and submits the grant for us for the buses and the EPA will host a webinar to find out what else we need to get into production. Chairman Walter asked if anyone would like to join the webinar, the Superintendent will email the link.

Consideration of County Election Resolution

Superintendent Rispens explained the annual resolution and added that as being fairly new to their positions, he and Clerk Hoogerheide would both be more comfortable having the County run the EHPS election. Trustee Balukas asked about the cost associated with asking the

County to run the election versus the EHPS district running it. Superintendent Rispens explained the costs. Chairman Walter spoke about the disadvantages of the County running the election, specifically the timelines associated and how long it takes to get the final results. The Board discussed the possibility of calling a special meeting to certify election results and reorganize the Board at a time other than the regularly scheduled Board meeting to ease the time constraints on verifying election results.

Motion by Trustee Balukas to have Lewis and Clark County run the EHPS School District Election next year.

Seconded by Trustee Murfitt

Unanimous Vote

Motion Carries

Consideration of Bylaw Revision - MTSUIP

Chairman Walter explained the revisions of Bylaws for MTSUIP of which we are a member.

Motion by Trustee Balukas to authorize Chairman Walter and Superintendent Rispens to cast the ballot and approve the revisions in the MTSUIP Bylaws

Seconded by Trustee Ellermeyer

Unanimous Vote

Motion Carries

Consideration of Late Non Resident Student Applications - Grades PK - 12

Superintendent Rispens explained the circumstances behind the late applications. We have a collection of non resident applications that arrived after the deadline for various reasons. The Board reviewed the applications and determined if they qualify for exceptional circumstances. Trustee Murfitt asked about the extenuating circumstances and the Trustees discussed guidelines and putting them in place moving forward.

Motion by Trustee Balukas to consider 5 applications # 256, 262, 263, 264, 265

Seconded by Trustee Ellermeyer

Vote 6 Yes: Trustee Murfitt, No

Motion Carries

Motion by Trustee Balukas to consider applications # 251, 253, 254, 268, 257, 267

Seconded by Trustee Ulmer

Vote: Ulmer Y

Baird Y

Balukas Y

Ellermeyer N

Murfitt N

Walter N

Motion Fails

24-25 School Year Bus Route Approval

The Transportation Supervisor has submitted proposed routes for 24-25. These will be brought to the County Transportation Committee with Board approval.

Superintendent explained an ADA bus route was also added this year.

Motion by Trustee Ellermeyer to approve the 24-25 School Year Bus Routes as Presented

Seconded by Trustee Murfitt

Unanimous Vote

Motion Carries

Girl's Flag Football Student Activity Account

AD/Transportation/Facility Use Director Shaun Murgel reported to the Board about a significant grant from the Atlanta Falcons for a Girls Flag Football Club. The club needs a student activity account to manage the funds and conduct additional fundraising.

Motion by Trustee Ellermeyer to approve the Girls Flag Football Student Activity Account

Seconded by Trustee Ulmer

Unanimous Vote

Motion Carries

Setting of Fees for 24-25

The Board is asked to consider the adjustments to various fees charged for the upcoming school year. Superintendent Rispens explained the rates and reasons to be competitive

Motion by Trustee Balukas to approve the fees as presented.

Seconded by Trustee Ellermeyer

Unanimous Vote

Motion Carries

ADJOURNMENT 7:58 pm

FUTURE MEETING DATES AND AGENDA ITEMS

Special Meeting Thursday, June 27th, 5:30 PM at Central Office - EOY Claims

Regular Meeting – Monday, July 8th, 2024 5:30 @ East Valley Middle School

Submitted by:

J. Cordell
District Secretary, Jen Cordell

7-8-24
Date

Approved by:

Scott A. Walter
Chairman, EHPS Board of Trustees

July 8, 2024
Date

