

MINUTES

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

Call to Order: Trustees of School District No. 9 held a meeting on March 10, 2025. Chairman Scott Walter called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

Attendance and Introduction of Board Members

Trustees Present: Chairman Scott Walter, Vice Chair Tyrel Murfitt, Stacy Baird, Tristan Ulmer, Marcia Ellermeyer, Martin Balukas , and Mark Diehl (@5:55)

Superintendent Dan Rispens, Clerk Jill Hoogerheide, Athletics Director Shaun Murgel, IT Coordinator Eric Power, District Secretary Jen Cordell, and Student Representative Brooke Harris

Building Admin: Michael Kemper, Trish Klock, Gus Somerfeld, Paul Condon and Brandon Crusat.

Visitors: Kate Johnson, Shana Dachs, Jon Moore, Jon Henneman, Trinity Nelson, Sam Wigen, Jana Nygaard, Katie Vanderzanden, Tim Baird, Karmen Christopherson, Dakota Norris, Cheryl Warburton, Gerry Moldenhaur, Emily Skinner, Marlee Fae, Darcy Christopherson, Colton Galliher, Tanner Baird, Eli Erdahl, Kurt Christopherson, Alaina Kooren, Nick Kooren, Cooper Dighans, Kevin Dighans, Trinity Stoner, Jerry(JD) Ferris

Review the Agenda

No comments

Hear the Public

No comments from the public

Reports

Student Report

Brooke Harris reported about this being a big month for sports. The Vigilante boys' basketball made it to state tournament this year. The students are looking forward to spring sports that started today which includes tennis, track, softball and baseball. Some events coming up are the Regional Student Council conference, Prom in April, and the donkey basketball game on the 17th. She said the majority of the students would like to have a 7-period school day and hoped that was something the school could look in to. She also introduced the winter team coaches to speak about their programs.

Jon Moore for Speech and Debate wanted to talk about how well his team has done this year. Every member on the team placed at divisionals. Ariana took home two state medals and there was a total of five for the members of the team.

One of the team captains spoke to the Board regarding all of the team accomplishments with six members qualifying for state for the first time and Eli Erdahl won the first ever tournament as a Vigilante wrestler.

Tim Baird, the coach for boys and girls wrestling spoke about the first year with a completely female team. They took 3rd in one tournament and every person on the girls' team placed at least once throughout the year. He believes that every member of the girls' team would have qualified for state if the rules and requirements were similar to the boys' team requirements. Both the boys' and girls' teams had multiple achievements and he is super proud of everyone on the team.

Jon Henneman, the Vigilantes swim coach talked about how amazing all his players did this year. All three male members qualified for finals. Sway Longshore from the girls' team has won many medals and is the first ever EHHS swim champion. He is very proud of all his team members.

Board Chair Walter congratulated all of the teams on their efforts.

Administrator Reports

EG and PPE Principal Brandon Crusat referenced his Board report about restructuring the day and the early out speaker. His highlight was 227 day and felt like the students were able to experience some great things and learned about why we have a 227 day and what it means. He also spoke a bit about the early literacy program and some of the house bills that are affecting it. HB628 may have some changes but he does not believe it will affect us much. The house bill adds in early numeracy and that is something we are already working on and some potentially different requirements to qualify students into the program.

Trustee Baird had some questions regarding the out of district numbers for kindergarten and wanted some clarifications of his behavior reports.

Radley Elementary Principal Gus Somerfeld referenced his Board report and wanted to highlight February's "I Love to Read" month. The Helena City Optimist Club donated 6 bicycles to raffle off to students who were "caught reading." The school has already raffled them off and distributed them to the 6 winners that morning. Ron Whitmoyer, EHPS former Superintendent came to read to a classroom which was a huge hit. He also wanted to highlight that Mrs. Finstad's 4th grade class was able to walk to the high school to talk to Casey Harris the industrial arts teacher, about how math and fractions are used in the industry. Gus felt like this was an amazing way to get certain students excited about academics and seeing a future working in that area. They feel like this is something they can continue to offer.

EVMS Vice Principal Michael Kemper reported about starting the third trimester and feels like everything is moving quickly now. Parent teacher conferences had a 94% turnout and the staff was very happy about that and felt like they accomplished a lot. 227 day was hosted by the High School

and they were able to hear from Casey Anderson. Mr. Anderson reinforced the need to stay calm and collected during stressful situations and also emphasized the close-knit community that East Helena has and all of the support that offers. Student behaviors were roughly the same as last month and there were a lot of issues with the snow when outside. They also noticed that cell phone infractions went up.

EHHS Principal Paul Condon spoke about the donkey basketball game which is something the students and staff have been working on and are very excited for the event.

Board Chair Walter had some questions about the fluctuations of enrolled students at the high school.

EHHS Vice Principal Trish Klock referenced her Board report. The number referrals compared to last year are dramatically lower. All suspensions in and out have lowered. She attributes this to all the work the staff has done and the students are working hard to follow the expectations. A current issue is the students skipping classes with the vast majority being the Juniors and Seniors.

Athletic Director Shaun Murgel spoke about all the activities happening. He wanted to point out that Mrs. Schoenfeld was named District 3 Student Council Advisor of the year. I Love to Read month had a lot of High Schoolers going out to read at the elementary schools which everyone felt was wonderful. We have a lot of activity groups using our facilities this month. Shout out to the transportation dept doing a great job to get everyone where they need to be.

IT Coordinator Eric Power shared about the E-rates and updating the end of life equipment. On Friday he finished rebuilding all the courses in infinite campus for the high school and 227 Academy. License Management will be a big deal and our anti-virus can be moved to Windows defender to save a considerable amount of money.

Trustee and Committee Reports of the K-12 Board

Chairman Walter solicited reports from the Trustees and Committees.

Chairman Walter talked about going to the national COSSBA meeting next week. He also spoke about MTSBA survey that went out in February asking for some feedback from Board members. The deadline to turn it in is this Wednesday and he encouraged all the trustees to complete the survey. He also stated that any questions or concerns can be addressed with him.

Chairman Walter also wanted to talk about the PTO and his hope to send a letter from the Board to them regarding how much work they are doing and how big of a help they have been. He feels like they do a lot and wants to show the Board's appreciation. Superintendent Rispens and Chairman Walter would like the Board to review the letter and possibly approve the final draft for signature at the next meeting.

No other reports from the Committees and Trustees.

Strategic Planning – Scan for Future Needs

Chairman Walter solicited the Board for any reports about strategic planning.

Superintendent Rispens spoke about possibly reviewing and/or revising the strategic plan. He asked the Board to consider the need. MTSBA has sent some information regarding their services.

He received a subdivision review request for phase-one of the Habitat for Humanity plan. The Superintendent wanted to make the Board aware of the uncertainty regarding student impact and the potential large increase in enrollment. Other questions are regarding bus routes over railroad tracks and how that will affect the district.

Legislative Status Report

The Board, Superintendent, Admin and the public all had an opportunity to report and discuss pending legislation.

Chairman Walter spoke about legislation and feels like it has been one of the more contentious legislative sessions he has encountered. School education has been doing pretty well. The legislation session is only through the first half of the meetings so we still have some time to wait but he feels like there are some bills to look forward to.

Superintendent Rispens agrees that the legislature meetings are contentious but feels like there has been a huge emphasis on schools this term. He feels it is very encouraging to see.

Notifications of Retirements and Resignations

The Following Staff Resignations Have Previously Been Accepted:

- Scott Ireland Radley PE/Health Teacher
- Karla Layson Radley Teacher
- Patricia Jorge Bus Driver

Consent Action Items

Minutes of the Regular Meeting February 10, 2025

Approval of the former and new warrants (Claims # 50729 - 50787) and (Payroll # 67760 - 67952)

Personnel Actions

Recommendation of Employment:

- Jenni Krause After School Program Instructor
- Kerstie Umsted Paraprofessional
- Leilani Lute After School Program Aide

- Luke Jackson After School Program Aide
- Lacey Brewer Student Aide/Trainer
- Paige Clayton Substitute
- Chelsa Smith Substitute
- Cassandra Ralph Substitute
- Tara Harrington Substitute
- Kimberly Dodd Substitute
- Joey Taylor Substitute
- Troy Arntson 5-8 Head Track Coach
- Tricia Haines 5-8 Asst Head Track Coach
- Nikki Odegard 5-8 Assistant Track Coach
- Tess Prendergast 5-8 Assistant Track Coach
- Alexis Cooney 5-8 Assistant Track Coach

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>	<u>Clancy</u>
MM (PreK)				
Kindergarten	1			
1 st grade	1			
2 nd grade	1			
3 rd grade	1			
4 th grade				
5 th grade				
6 th grade				
7 th grade				
8 th grade				
9 th grade				
10 th grade				
11 th grade	1			
12 th grade				

Total: 5

Chairman Walter wanted to mention that there was an adjustment to the minutes that all the Board received for review before the meeting.

Motion by Trustee Balukas, seconded by Trustee Ellermeyer to approve the consent action items as presented with the slight change in the minutes. Unanimous vote for the motion. The motion carries.

Unfinished Business

Budget Update and Discussion – Mill Levy Consideration

Superintendent Rispens and Clerk Hoogerheide briefed the Board about our FY '26 budget outlook and pending legislation that could impact the budget.

The Board discussed the possibility of a need for a mill levy election.

Non-Resident Application Update

Superintendent Rispens spoke about the current list of out of district students wanting to come to EHPS for the 25-26 school year.

New Business

Chairman Walter asked to move the Student Travel Request to the first item under New Business.

Student Travel Request – EHHS FCS and Ag Programs

Trinity Nelson and Sam Wigen, the EHHS FCS and Ag teachers, presented a student travel request to Northern Italy and France for Board consideration. The tour is focused strongly on agriculture and culinary arts.

Motion by Vice Chair Murfitt, seconded by Trustee Ellermeyer to approve the travel request.
Unanimous vote for the motion. The motion carries.

ELA Curriculum and Adoption

The District Curriculum Committee has been working on our English Language Arts Curriculum revisions and presented their work to the Board.

Motion by Vice Chair Murfitt, seconded by Trustee Baird to adopt the curriculum as presented.
Unanimous vote for the motion. The motion carries.

ELA Materials Purchase Request

The District Curriculum Committee recommended the purchase of new materials for our LittleLantes and grades 6 through 12 to support the new ELA curriculum.

Motion by Vice Chair Murfitt, seconded by Trustee Ellermeyer to approve the purchase request.
Unanimous vote for the motion. The motion carries.

School Bus Purchase Request Consideration

Superintendent Rispens presented a bus purchase request to update our fleet and prepare us for future needs.

Motion by Trustee Balukas, seconded by Vice Chair Murfitt to authorize the Superintendent to negotiate one diesel pusher and one conventional bus as equipped to fit the districts needs. Unanimous vote for the motion. The motion carries.

Notice of Intent Regarding Permissive Levies – Resolution #241

Superintendent Rispens presented the District's required notice for permissive levy potential increases or decreases for the 25-26 school year.

Motion by Vice Chair Murfitt, seconded by Trustee Baird to approve the resolution as presented. Unanimous vote for the motion. The motion carries.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Future Meeting Dates and Agenda Items

The next regular meeting will be held on April 14, 2025 @ 5:30 EVMS

Submitted by: Jill Hoogerheide
Board Clerk, Jill Hoogerheide

4/09/25
Date

Approved by: Scott A. Walter
Chairman, Board of Trustees

APRIL 14, 2025
Date

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