TO: **Trustees, East Helena Schools**

FROM: **Dan Rispens, Superintendent**

BOARD MEETING: **September 8, 2025**

RE: **Student Enrollment (September 3, 2025)**

School	Grade Level	To Date	Month Ago (June)	Year Ago
Eastgate	Age-K	48	51	50
	K	145	116	113
EG Total		**[193]**	**[167]**	**[163]**
Prickly Pear	1	129	127	124
	2	132	150	150
Prickly Pear Total		**[261]**	**[277]**	**[274]**
Radley Elementary	3	158	147	147
	4	157	147	144
	5	151	134	135
Radley Total		**[466]**	**[428]**	**[426]**
East Valley	6	152	151	149
Middle School	7	152	151	153
	8	150	166	172
EVMS Total		**[454]**	**[468]**	**[474]**
East Helena High	9	176	141	162
	10	132	138	154
	11	134	130	145
	12	121	118	129
EHHS Total		**[563]**	**[527]**	**[590]**
EVMS 227	6	2	12	9
	7	13	10	7
	8	9	10	6
EVMS 227 Total		**[24]**	**[32]**	**[22]**
EHHS 227	9	6	8	5
	10	16	22	17
	11	23	15	20
	12	20	15	12
EHHS 227 Total		**[65]**	**[60]**	**[54]**
TOTALS		**2026**	**1959**	**2003**

School Board Report
September 8th, 2025

Chairman Walter and Trustees,
Here are some monthly items to share with you.

Focus - Refine

Since I was given the opportunity to serve as the principal over 5 years ago, it has been inspiring to see the different systems and practices our teams at each building have created. Last spring, our School Leadership Team assisted in collecting qualitative data for different practices/processes with academics, behavior, progress monitoring, Conscious Discipline, data tracking, safety, and professional development. With the introduction of Character Strong, a framework to continue to enhance character building and student safety, there was a clear need to spend time aligning this to Conscious Discipline and Olweus, our bullying program. Our Instructional Coach, Mrs. Shana Dachs, provided staff with a PIR over Character Strong. This work helped lay the foundation for the collaboration that took place between teams and schools during our August In Service days.

All of this work and the continued feedback is creating the path for our focus this year. This school year, our grade level teams and School Leadership Team will continue to refine all of the items that have been put in place over the past 5 years. I am excited to work alongside these dedicated educators to continue to make all of the work for our students better!

Morning Announcements

In an effort to continue to enhance our school family culture and connect the two buildings, we will be structuring our announcements a bit differently this year. Each morning, at 8:30, teachers and students, from both Eastgate and Prickly Pear, will login to a Zoom meeting for our school announcements. We will cover the "typical" items (lunch and birthdays) as well as highlight a daily focus that is driven from Character Strong and provide different positive noticings from students, staff, and classrooms.

Enrollment

Throughout summer, we saw our enrollment rapidly rise at both schools. Currently, we are sitting at 17 students per class in LittleLantes, 18-19 students per class in kindergarten, 18 students per class in 1st grade, and 16-17 students per class in 2nd grade. New registrations show 8 new kindergartners, 16 new first graders, and 8 new second graders for a total of 32 new students.

Upcoming Events and New Staff

- **Eastgate -** Chelsea Smith - Para, Nicole Burgess - Para
- **Prickly Pear** - Alyssa Terry - Para, Josh Jones - Special Education Teacher
- September 25th - Kindergarten Open House - 6:00 - 7:00
- September 29th - Early Release - Vertical Alignment - Writing, Time in Text
- October 1st - Walk To School Day

Thank you!
Brandon Crusat, Eastgate and Prickly Pear Elementary Principal

Month	Gen. Insap./Defiance	Playground	Fighting/Physical Contact	Bus	Weapons	Vandalism	Threat	Bullying	Harassment	Profanity	Total
September											0
October											0
November											0
December											0
January											0
February											0
March											0
April											0
May											0
June											0
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Month	Warning	Time Out	Conference	Parent Call	Bus Sus.	Alt. Recess	OSS	ISS	CSCT	Total
September										0
October										0
November										0
December										0
January										0
February										0
March										0
April										0
May										0
June										0
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Eastgate Elementary

Month	Gen. Innap./Defiance	Playground	Fighting/Physical Contact	Bus	Weapons	Vandalism	Threat	Bullying	Harassment	Profanity	Total
September											0
October											0
November											0
December											0
January											0
February											0
March											0
April											0
May											0
June											0
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Month	Warning	Time Out	Conference	Parent Call	Bus Sus.	Alt. Recess	OSS	ISS	CSCT Referral	Total
September										0
October										0
November										0
December										0
January										0
February										0
March										0
April										0
May										0
June										0
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Prickly Pear Elementary

EAST HELENA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

School District No. 9 • PO Box 1280 • East Helena • Montana • 59635

Superintendent/Administration Office (406) 227-7700
Eastgate Elementary (406) 227-7770, grades pre & K
Prickly Pear Elementary (406) 227-7720, grades 1-2
Radley Elementary (406) 227-7710, grades 3-5
East Valley Middle School (406) 227-7740, grades 6-8
East Helena High School (406) 227-7730, grades 9-12

SUCCESS FOR ALL

September 8, 2025 Radley Elementary Board Report Gus Somerfeld

- I am pleased to share that our recent Open House was a great success. We had an outstanding turnout from families, with many classrooms filled to capacity as parents, guardians, and students explored the building together.

- With the addition of 43 new students this year, our school community is growing in exciting ways. At the same time, this rapid increase has presented several challenges:
  - **Class Sizes:** Some grade levels are approaching or exceeding recommended class size ratios.
  - **Resources & Materials:** Additional curriculum materials, technology devices, and classroom supplies are needed to ensure all students have equitable access.
  - **Support Services:** Student services such as counseling, intervention, and special education need to be scaled to meet increased demand.
  - **Family Integration:** With many new families joining, continued efforts are needed to build strong school–home partnerships and ensure smooth transitions.

  We are committed to meeting these challenges proactively and will continue to collaborate with staff, families, and the district to support every student's success.

- We introduced a redesigned and more efficient master schedule that incorporates Tier I, II, and III services for all students. The goal is to ensure every child receives the right level of support within the school day.
  - **Tier I (Core Instruction):** All students receive high-quality, grade-level instruction aligned to state standards. Teachers have dedicated, uninterrupted blocks for literacy and math to maximize learning time.
  - **Tier II (Targeted Support):** The schedule provides structured intervention periods where students needing additional support receive small-group instruction without missing core instruction. This ensures targeted help while keeping students connected to the classroom community.
  - **Tier III (Intensive Support):** For students with the greatest needs, the schedule carves out time for individualized or very small-group intervention, often in collaboration with specialists.

  By building Tier I, II, and III into the master schedule, we are ensuring that intervention and enrichment are part of the school day, not an add-on.

- Our PTO continues to play a vital role in supporting our school community. Most recently, they committed funds to purchase new playground equipment. This investment will enhance outdoor play opportunities, promote physical activity, and provide a safer, more engaging environment for students. We are grateful for the PTO's dedication and for the strong partnership between families and the school.

- Discipline Report

September Resolution Data				
Total Resolutions	**Total Students**	**3rd Grade**	**4th Grade**	**5th Grade**
Before Class	**After Class**	**During Passing**	**Cafeteria/Recess**	**During Class**
Classroom	**Cafeteria**	**Hallway/Stairs/Gym**	**Restroom**	**Playground**

Year to Date Resolutions				
Total Resolutions	**Total Students**	**3rd Grade**	**4th Grade**	**5th Grade**
Before Class	**After Class**	**During Passing**	**Cafeteria/Recess**	**During Class**
Classroom	**Cafeteria**	**Hallway/Stairs/Gym**	**Restroom**	**Playground**

K-5 SummerPALS/JUMPSTART

- Our K-5 programs enrolled 11 students for half-day PK, 86 students for Jumpstart, and 56 students for our PALS program. Collectively we enrolled 153 PK-5th grade students for our summer program.
  - We staff nine teachers and four paraprofessionals to support our student body.
  - In the final week of the program we assessed student math computations and reading fluency skills. 85% of our students either maintained or demonstrated higher scores as compared to their spring benchmarks.
  - Attendance was certainly less consistent than our typical school year, but understandably so. There were family camping trips, summer vacations, bible camps, and sports camps students were enrolled in throughout the summer. Nonetheless, we certainly had strong attendance from a large number of our students.
- Enrichment Opportunities:
  - Every Tuesday a team of teachers led a STEM exploration activity in the afternoon. This included using everyday items to design a boat that held weight, bridge design using popsicle sticks, creating the tallest tower that was self-standing, etc.
  - Every Friday the EH pool assisted students with swim lessons, accumulating with a free swim the last week of school.
  - Field Trips:
    - MT Historical Society Helena Downtown Tour Train
    - First People's Buffalo Jump (Ulm, MT)
    - MT Wild
    - Missouri River Headwaters State Park
    - Movie at Cinemark

2025-2026 --- Radley Discipline Report

TYPE of REFERRAL

	General Misbehavior	Open Defiance	Fighting or Intent to Harm	Bullying	Bus Discipline	Chronic Minor Behavior	Weapons or Substances	Vandalism	Threat or Intimidation	Theft	Harrassment	Profanity	monthly totals
September		2											2
October													0
November													0
December													0
January													0
February													0
March													0
April													0
May/June													0
total	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2

CONSEQUENCES

	Warning	Time out	Work Detail	Conference	Parent Meeting	Bus Suspension	Recess Det.	Lunch Detention	Detention	**ISS	***OSS	Alternative	monthly totals
September										1	1		2
October													0
November													0
December													0
January													0
February													0
March													0
April													0
May/June													0
total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2

* Every office discipline referral results in a parent phone call, at a minimum.
** In-School Suspension
*** Out of School Suspension

East Valley Middle School

Success for All Students

EVMS Sept. Board Report

The 2025-2026 school year has commenced with positive momentum across our school. We are pleased to report that the beginning of this academic year has been marked by strong enrollment figures and a smooth start to the term.

EVMS Staff has taken a fun approach to introducing themselves on EVMS Student Council TikTok Page and EVMS Facebook page.

Our Goals for EVMS for the 25-26 school year are as follows:

- Increase frequency and growth for IXL for all students in math and comm arts.
- Schoolwide expectations implemented with fidelity
- Continue and build on learning lab interventions
- Explore ways to increase student attendance

We are continuing to hold our students to their highest standards.

Enrollment Overview:

- **EVMS (East Valley Middle School):** Enrollment has reached a robust total of 455 students. This number reflects a healthy interest in our programs and a stable community engagement in the school's educational offerings.
- **227 Academy:** Enrollment stands at 25 students. This smaller but dedicated group is indicative of the focused and specialized nature of the Academy's programs.

Average Class Sizes

- 6th Grade~27
- 7th Grade~26
- 8th Grade~25

Sports:

- Volleyball and Cross Country started Sept. 2.

Behavior: The year has started off pretty smooth. We have been busy establishing routines/procedures and expectations. One of the bigger changes we are implementing this year is no cell phones during lunch. In past years students were allowed to be on devices during lunch and recess but we are now a 100% cell phone free school.

East Helena High School
"Home of the Vigilantes"
2760 Valley Drive, East Helena, MT 59635
(406) 227-7730 - Phone ■ (406) 227-3520 - Fax

EHHS Principal Report

September 2025

School is in

We have (as of September 3rd) 608 students (HS = 542, 227 Academy = 66). There are 183 Freshman, 147 Sophomores, 147 Juniors, and 131 Seniors.

After a great first year, Trish and I are looking to continue the good things that were already in place; like reaching out to parents to discuss the importance of attendance, continuing the consistency in day to day functioning (like discipline structures), continuing helping teachers create a positive academic and socially appropriate school environment, and continuing to work with community, students and teachers to create our unique and evolving Vigilante Culture and Norms.

One of our new initiatives is Advisory/Circle up time. We also are organizing meeting scheduling, teacher routines, smart pass, concessions set ups, as well as making links between the community work force and our students.

Attendance

Attendance continues to be an issue for all American schools. We will create a school wide collaboration as we look at what has worked elsewhere and look to make decisions with input from Community, Staff and Students.

New Teachers

We would like to welcome our new teachers to the High School:
Nick Edlund – Business Studies
Patrica Gillett – Business Studies
Brandy Gallups – Special Education
Alex Reid – Social Studies
Kacey Titus - English

New Curriculum Adoption

English will be operating with a new Curriculum this year after teachers trained through last year and this Summer to put all the pieces in place. This year will see the Math teachers working on what Curriculum they will use starting 2026-27.

Scheduling

We have finished all the student scheduling which was quicker than last year. The 227 Academy scheduling took the longest time as we are now providing online opportunities through Harmony. As with all things both the HS scheduling and 227 Academy scheduling will be improved for next year.

Homecoming Parade

The Homecoming Parade will be at 2pm on Friday September 26th, followed by the Home Football Game v Park, with the theme of 'Western'. After the game will be the Homecoming Street Party outside between the Football Field and HS Building (Commons if needed due to weather) until 11pm.

Shout Outs

To our dedicated sports coaches in Football, Volleyball, Soccer, Golf, Cross Country and Flag Football who have been working hard with our student athletes in the late summer and fall sports seasons.

To our Community members who have been running a myriad of activities for students in our community.

To Mr. Skains and the custodial staff who worked all summer to keep our building looking immaculate and safe for our students return to the classroom.

To Ms. Cobb for organizing our link up crew to tour around our incoming Freshman the week before school started.

To Ms. Kerpa and Mr. Hoffman who dealt with the fixing of schedules in the High School, and the new 227 Academy.

September School Board Report
East Helena High School

VIGILANTES

PBIS Program/Expectations:
We are continuing to make strides in not only managing behaviors but reinforcing strong expectations in every part of the school community. We have changed our Blue Day schedule to include an Advisor period (20 Minutes) and Circle Up (54 Minutes). Advisor class consists of lessons created by staff members over the summer to address the needs of our students. These include lessons on the Student Handbook, How to High School, Advanced Opportunity Presentations, Infinite Campus, Indian Education For All lessons, Character lessons, ACT Prep and so much more. These lessons are broken out by grade level. The MTSS team at the high school will review these lessons at monthly meetings and make adjustments to future lessons based on teacher and student feedback.

After Advisor, the students then transition into Circle Up. This time is dedicated to allow students to not only make up tests, quizzes, assignments; but we have club meetings and community partner presentations scheduled for the entire year. This allows students who are involved in so many different aspects of our school to actively participate in as much as they can without causing them to come in early, work through lunch or stay late after school. The extra time to make up for absences, many include school related or activity absences, without having teachers working through lunch or before/after school. Make-up labs and tests can be scheduled for a group without too much work for our staff. This time also allows for students to connect to a staff member as they will have the same person for Advisor and Circle Up. This person will also continue to be their advisor for all four years of high school.

Office Referrals
We have had 3 office referrals the first three days of school in August. All three referrals (General Inappropriate Behavior) resulted in a conversation with the students, phone calls home and time in the office. There were zero detentions the first week of school.

Vape Detectors
They are installed in the bathrooms at East Helena High School and are actively monitored throughout the course of the school day. Each Vape Detector has been tested and reset as needed over the summer months. If vape is detected, it sends an alert to the administration via

text and email. Students who violate the policy are required to complete an online course about vaping including a discussion with administration and our School Resource Officer. The next steps are outlined in our discipline matrix if a student continues to violate the policy. The detectors also notify the office if there is excessive noise in those areas.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Klock
EHHS Vice Principal

East Helena High School

School District No. 9 * P.O. Box 1280 * East Helena, MT. 59635

District Office (406) 227-7700 * EHH School Office (406) 227-7730

"Success For All"

To: East Helena School Board

From: Shaun Murgel

Subject: 9/08/2025

Activities: We are off and running with all of our Fall Sports Activities. There is a lot of action going on at the high school this Fall. We have the first couple of weeks in the books and our kids are competing and doing a great job each week. Our coaches have had a great summer of getting our kids ready to play this year. We have had our first full week of activities with all of our programs competing. We had soccer at home and our girls played extremely well against Stevensville and ended with a tie. Our boys are still waiting for some kids to have enough practices and will have a full team for the rest of the season. Football and Volleyball both started the season in Miles City.

Our Clubs are all getting rolling as the school year starts. Our flag football team had a great showing to start the season and the Trap Club has had their first initial meeting. Esports is gearing up for tryouts for the fall season. As usual we have a lot of things going on.

Transportation: We have a full schedule of not just bus routes where we have added a 10th route now but also in activities. Nick has done a great job of recruiting drivers and we have several sub drivers that have come on board and we should have plenty of help for coverage as we start taking our kids all over the state for activities.

Nick Turner nturner@ehps.k12.mt.us Transportation Supervisor Contact

https://ehhs.ehpsmt.gov/ehhs-athletics-activities/athletics-updates/sports

District Website link:

https://www.ehpsmt.gov/

AD Newsletter link:

https://ehhs.ehpsmt.gov/ehhs-athletics-activities/athletics-updates

Facilities: The requests have started coming in for the use of all of our buildings and we are slowly getting those filled as they come in. We are expecting another busy season of building use as always.

Facility Use Schedule Link and my email:

https://www.ehpsmt.gov/district-facilities/district-facility-use/facility-reservation-instructions

smurgel@ehps.k12.mt.us.

Thanks

Shaun Murgel

EHPS Technology Report

Sept. 8th, 2025

To the EHPS Chairman and Board of Trustees,

As the new school year kicks off, we've focused on resolving the large number of help tickets from staff and students. While it has been very busy, it has provided a great learning experience on what to expect and focus on during the summer months to ensure everyone is set for the first day of school.

Over the summer we had two large projects we wanted to focus on. The first was a change in antivirus software to Windows Defender and Endpoint Detection and Response (EDR) to Huntress. Now that the transition is complete, I have been very happy with the setup as it provides a much more in-depth look at the security side while providing real-time monitoring and notifications for any issues that may come up. The second project was the deployment of 300 new Chromebooks at Radley.

Another big change from last year is the implementation and use of cross-site enrollment within Infinite Campus to reduce the workload on teachers with shared 227 and EHHS classrooms. With this being the first year using this setup (I believe we're among the first to use it in the state), I expected some hiccups but it has been working well so far. With the staff at the high school, we will continue to monitor it for any oddities and fix them along the way.

Thank you for your time,

Eric Power
Technology Coordinator

Central Office Move Expenses

Description	Vendor	Amount
Fiber Cable	BMO HARRIS COMMERICAL CARD	364.00
Clinic Renovations	SUTHEIMER, GLENN	1,475.00
Clinic Renovations	SUTHEIMER, GLENN	250.00
Labor to move window	FRONT LINE GLASS	374.00
Furniture for new office	AMAZON	1,927.88
Desk for Dan	Marketplace	300.00
Table, name plates, etc	Amazon	381.33
Signage	Yesco	3,538.25
Chair covers	Amazon	49.99
Electrical work	Lewis & Clark Electric- estimate	645.00
	Total	9,305.45

Summer Work and Upgrades

We hope all of our EHPS families have had a great summer. Here in the district we always try to get some of our bigger (and smaller) maintenance projects completed over the summer break. Here's a brief rundown of what the crews were working on this year:

- Asphalt repair at the bus barn driveway
- Replace a portion of Radley's roof (That was leaking badly), and roof repairs in other buildings as needed.
- Flooring replacement in the cafeteria hallway at EVMS
- Summer maintenance and care of all grounds and landscaping including fertilizer and weed control
- Deep cleaning of all buildings
- Gym floor resurfacing (All gyms)
- Air conditioning repair at EVMS and Radley
- EVMS Cafeteria lighting upgrade
- Light fixture ballast replacements
- Central Office move
- Replaced HVAC Air filters in all schools
- Replaced Drinking fountain filters in all schools
- Playground surface upgrades and maintenance
- Radley 4th grade hallway coat hook replacement

For me, one of the most exciting summer projects was the playground upgrade at Radley School. The PTO donated funds for a new, upgraded piece of playground equipment for the kids. The district coordinated and paid for the contractors to install it. This new structure is kind of a trainer for American Ninja Warrior! I hope you get a chance to check it out (picture below), and I can't wait to see our students enjoying the new structure. Shoutout to our AWESOME PTO for making this happen and thanks to everyone who supports their work on behalf of our kiddos!



AASA
THE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION

National Conference on Education



Save the Date: #NCE2026 in Nashville, TN

The National Conference on Education, presented by AASA, The School Superintendents Association, is the premier professional development and networking event for school superintendents and administrators.

Hear from education thought leaders who are championing our nation's school systems and take home new ideas and approaches to invigorate your own district.

With more than 4,000 superintendents attending, you're bound to form an industry network you can leverage for improving equity, student outcomes, district performance and so much more.

Receive Updates
(https://aasa.realmagnet.land/nce-2026-leads)