

Hellgate Elementary Board of Trustees

Regular Meeting September 8, 2025

6:00 p.m.

OPENING

The Board of Trustees of Hellgate Elementary School District #4 met in regular session on Monday, September 8th, 2025. The meeting was held in-person. The meeting was called to order by Board Chairman, Tom McLaughlin. Trustees participating were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Beth Herron, Kallie Gatzemeier, Jacquelyn Ryan, Tom Cook and Scott Rouse. Molly Blakely and District Clerk Justine Reese were present for the meeting. District staff participating included, Erin Ellis (Curriculum Director), Brendan Brown (Special Services Director), Haley Patzner (Building 3 Teacher), Tiffany Hobbs (Principal Building 3), Brent Heist (Principal Building 1), Jamie Courville (Principal Building 4), Julie McCarthy-McLavery (Principal Building 2), and Kristen Guidoni (HEEA rep. and Band Teacher). Community members in attendance included Austin Rouse (Student), Becky Mangun (Harlow's Transportation liaison), and Rose Kubler (Parent). There were up to 20 total guests/participants in the meeting, in-person.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Rose Kubler presented an appeal to the open enrollment decision after moving out of district this summer, not realizing she needed to complete the out-of-district process. Her child has only ever been a student at Hellgate Elementary, but now lives in the DeSmet boundaries. She questioned why her student would be denied and requested the Trustees allow them to stay at Hellgate. Tom McLaughlin noted the district is strict on out-of-district policy, and any appeals to the decision will need to be addressed by the County Superintendent, Erin Lipkind. Becky Mangun, Harlow's Transportation Liaison, was in attendance to show her support of the Hellgate Trustees and noted the beginning of the school year was going very well.

HEEA

Kristen Guidoni provided a brief update on the beginning of the school year.

RECOGNITION OF STUDENTS AND STAFF

There was no recognition at the meeting.

BOARD CORRESPONDENCE

Trustees reviewed the monthly newsletter from OPI.

REVIEW OF THE MINUTES-REGULAR MEETING 8-11-2025

A motion was made by Scott Rouse to approve the minutes from the August 11th, 2025 regular meeting. There was no discussion on the topic. The motion was seconded by Beth Herron. Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Kallie Gatzemeier, Beth Herron, Tom Cook, Jacquelyn Ryan, and Scott Rouse. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

REVIEW OF THE MINUTES-SPECIAL MEETING 8-21-2025

A motion was made by Rich Thornock to approve the minutes from the August 21st, 2025 regular meeting. There was no discussion on the topic. The motion was seconded by Scott Rouse. Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Kallie Gatzemeier, Beth Herron, Tom Cook, Jacquelyn Ryan, and Scott Rouse. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

REVIEW OF THE WARRANTS-AUGUST 2025

A motion was made by Tom Cook to approve the August 2025 claims. There were clarifying questions from the Trustees. The motion was seconded by Jacquelyn Ryan. Voting in favor of the motion were Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Kallie Gatzemeier, Beth Herron, Jacquelyn Ryan, Tom Cook, and Scott Rouse. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

REVIEW OF BUDGET REPORTS

Trustees reviewed the budget reports for August 2025.

REVIEW OF STUDENT ACTIVITIES

A motion was made by Rich Thornock to approve the August 2025 Student Activities Report. There was no discussion on the item. The motion was seconded by Kallie Gatzemeier. Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Jacquelyn Ryan, Kallie Gatzemeier, Beth Herron, Tom Cook, and Scott Rouse. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

RESIGNATION OF CLASSIFIED STAFF CONSIDERATION:

A motion was made by Rich we need a motion to approve the resignation of: Ms. Kristen Matson, school nurse, effective October 15, 2025; Hollee Gossett, paraprofessional, effective August 11, 2025; Kala Rushing, paraprofessional, effective August 8, 2025; Duncan Nauts, custodian, effective August 15, 2025; Layla Mulholland, custodian, effective September 20, 2025 (letters available in official board packet). There were clarifying questions discussed. The motion was seconded by Jacquelyn Ryan. Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Jacquelyn Ryan, Kallie Gatzemeier, Beth Herron, Tom Cook, and Scott Rouse. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

CLASSIFIED STAFF HIRING CONSIDERATIONS:

A motion was made by Kallie Gatzemeier to approve the hiring of the following: Ms. Kayla Kallas, school nurse, effective October 8, 2025. There was no discussion on the item. The motion was seconded by Beth Herron. Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Jacquelyn Ryan, Kallie Gatzemeier, Beth Herron, Tom Cook, and Scott Rouse. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

CERTIFIED STAFF HIRING CONSIDERATIONS:

A motion was made by Jacquelyn Ryan to approve the hiring of the following: Ms. Shelley Hibbert, long-term maternity substitute teacher, effective October 20, 2025; Ms. Laura Young, long-term substitute, effective October 7, 2025. There was brief discussion on the topic including clarification on significant changes. The motion was seconded by Scott Rouse. Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Jacquelyn Ryan, Kallie Gatzemeier, Beth Herron, Tom Cook, and Scott Rouse. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL FOR LIBRARY VARIANCE CONSIDERATION:

A motion was made by Rich Thornock for Hellgate Elementary to submit a library variance request for building 2 (grades pre-k - 1st), building 1 (grades 2-3), and building 3 (grades 4-6) to the Montana Office of Public Instruction regarding ARM 10.55.709 (Library Media Services K-12). While the district recognizes that its current staffing arrangement does not align exactly with the standard, the district believes that its unique campus structure and staffing plan provide sufficient and high-quality library services to all students. There were clarifying questions addressed. The motion was seconded by Kallie Gatzemeier. Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Jacquelyn Ryan, Kallie Gatzemeier, Beth Herron, Tom Cook, and Scott Rouse. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MONTANA AG-CORE PROGRAM COORDINATOR:

A motion was made by Tom Cook to approve the hiring of an Ag-Core Program Coordinator. The Ag-Core Program Coordinator for Hellgate Elementary will support hands-on agricultural education by helping to manage the school garden, will coordinate student learning opportunities, and engage the community in sustainable growing practices. This role bridges classroom instruction with real-world application, fostering environmental stewardship, nutrition awareness, and teamwork among students. There was brief discussion and clarifying questions answered regarding the item. The motion was seconded by Jacquelyn Ryan. Voting in

favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Jacquelyn Ryan, Kallie Gatzemeier, Beth Herron, Tom Cook, and Scott Rouse. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF HIRING THE ATHLETIC DIRECTOR FOR THE 2025-2026 SCHOOL YEAR:

A motion was made by Jacquelyn Ryan to approve the hiring of Mr. Taylor Nordby to be the athletic director for the 2025- 2026 school year. There was no discussion on the item. The motion was seconded by Beth Herron. Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Jacquelyn Ryan, Kallie Gatzemeier, Beth Herron, Tom Cook, and Scott Rouse. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF HIRING THE ATHLETIC COACHES FOR FALL SPORTS:

A motion was made by Kallie Gatzemeier to approve the following individuals to be coaches for fall sports (table below). There was brief discussion related to the increased cost in activity fees. The motion was seconded by Rich Thornock. Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Jacquelyn Ryan, Kallie Gatzemeier, Beth Herron, Tom Cook, and Scott Rouse. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

<u>Cross Country Head Coaches:</u> Dale Asanovich and Michael Straw	<u>Volleyball:</u> 8A, Head Coach: Sheyla Gallagher 7A, Head Coach: Derek Dungan Assistant Coaches: CJ Brandt, Sammi Rasmussen, Millie Belcourt, Cailen Bosch	<u>Soccer:</u> Head Coaches: Sean Kaleva, Olivia moore, Tatum Egan
<u>Flag Football:</u> Head Coach: Tyler Glenn Assistant Coach: Garry Glenn	<u>Sprit Squad:</u> Head Coach: Amanda Pham	<u>Robotics:</u> Advisor: Jordan Capp Assistant: Olivia Moore and CJ Brandt

APPROVAL OF EXTRA-CURRICULAR STIPENDS FOR THE 2025-2026 SCHOOL YEAR:

A motion was made by Beth Herron to approve stipends for extra-curricular activities for the 2025-2026 school year (full list available in official board packet). The motion was seconded by Rich Thornock. There was no discussion on the item. Voting in favor of tabling the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Jacquelyn Ryan, Kallie Gatzemeier, Beth Herron, Tom Cook, and Scott Rouse. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF THE 2025-2026 SUBSTITUTE LIST:

A motion was made by Scott Rouse to approve the substitute list for the 2025-2026 school year (full list available in official board packet). The motion was seconded by Jacquelyn Ryan. There was no discussion on the item. Voting in favor of tabling the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Jacquelyn Ryan, Kallie Gatzemeier, Beth Herron, Tom Cook, and Scott Rouse. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION ITEMS/ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Enrollment Update: There is a significant increase in 8th grade enrollment, currently the highest enrollment in the middle school Hellgate has seen since 2019/2020.

Reunification Drill: September 29, 2025 will be the Reunification drill. There will be a variety of items to successfully implement the drill, multiple school districts will be observing the drill along with other public entities.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

There were no committee reports at the meeting.

PRINCIPALS' REPORTS

Building 1: Staff are off to a strong start. The new paging system is in place and different sounds are being tested.

Building 2: Teachers report a great start, with positive feedback from Back to School Night the Monday before the start of school. A variety of testing is in process or will begin soon.

Building 3: Ms. Patzner is excited to be in the building, electives are thriving, and Campus Connect with Ms. Thornock has had a very successful beginning.

Building 4: Large class sizes are being managed smoothly, sports are underway, and grounds look excellent thanks to Zach and his team. The Roots and Resilience program is operating without disruption, and cellphone use has not been an issue.

Special Education: Partnering with Partnership Health to help address CSCT needs in the district.

Curriculum: DIBELS testing has begun (special thanks to Building 2), with MAP and MAST testing to follow soon. Thanks to Kelsey for handling rostering.

NEXT MEETING DATE:

The next regular meeting of the Board will be October 13, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

There was no public comment at this time.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 6:38 pm.

Tom McLaughlin, Board Chair

Justine Reese, Business Manager/Clerk