



Great People...Great Falls Public Schools

October 2025,

Great Falls...

As autumn settles over Great Falls, the sound of students crunching through golden leaves on their way to school marks both a change in season and a shift in rhythm. The excitement of fall sports gives way to the anticipation of winter activities, while hallways and auditoriums come alive with the sounds of music festivals and theatre productions. With the first quarter of the school year officially behind us, this is a time to reflect on the growth, learning, and community spirit that continue to define our schools—and to look forward to all that lies ahead in the months to come. Welcome to the October edition of Highlights with Superintendent Hoyer.

Harmony in Action – Applauding the talent of our young musicians.

- Music and the arts are thriving across Great Falls Public Schools! Under the leadership of Fine Arts Supervisor Dusty Molyneaux, our dedicated music staff recently hosted a highly successful All-State Music Festival, October 16–18, on behalf of the Montana High School Association—welcoming talented student musicians from across the state. As fall concerts conclude, our own gifted students and teachers are already preparing for the joy of the holiday season. Meanwhile, the C.M. Russell High School Drama Department is putting the finishing touches on their fall musical, *The Addams Family*, with performances scheduled for November 14–15 and 21–22. Showtimes are at 7:30 pm with matinees on November 15 and 22 at 2:00 pm. For more information and ticket information, please call (406) 268-6117. Great Falls High School brings four showings of *Steel Magnolias* to its stage, running November 20-22 at 7:30 pm with a matinee on November 22 at 2:00 pm. For more information or tickets, please call (406) 268-6354 or (406) 268-6278.

Hometown Pride – Celebrating the unique spirit and traditions of Great Falls!

- Fall is a season rich with tradition in Great Falls Public Schools—some cherished over generations, and others newly created through the generosity of our community partners. Again, this year, Torgerson's Equipment shared the spirit of the season by donating 642 pumpkins to our first graders, giving students across the district the chance to carve their own jack-o'-lanterns and celebrate the joy of autumn. At the same time, our talented music department is launching its annual fruit sales, a long-standing fundraiser that helps provide exceptional travel and performance opportunities for our student musicians—sometimes taking them beyond our community, state, and even the nation. If you would like to support this tradition, please contact Great Falls High at (406) 268-6250 or C.M. Russell High School at (406) 268-6100. Fruit will arrive just in time for the holidays!

Harkening Winter Sports – Ushering in another season.

- As we say goodbye to another exciting fall sports season, we celebrate the hard work and dedication of our student-athletes, coaches, and fans. C.M. Russell High will host the Butte High Bulldogs on Friday, October 31st, while Great Falls High travels to Helena High for the first round of the MHSAA football playoffs. High School volleyball is wrapping up its season, with postseason pairings available on school Facebook pages next week. Looking ahead, winter sports are just around the corner—basketball, wrestling, and swimming practices officially begin November 24th, and middle school boys' basketball tipped off October 20th. We invite the community to come to cheer on our athletes as they continue to represent their schools with pride and sportsmanship.

Heartfelt Focus – Communicating with our community.

- School safety is always a top focus for Great Falls Public Schools, and we are committed to ensuring that our schools remain safe places where students can learn and teachers can teach. We recognize there can be confusion in the community about the terminology used during safety events, so clear communication is essential. A **“Lockdown”** is used when a threat is **inside the building**—external doors remain unlocked to allow first responders access, but classroom and learning space doors are secured. A **“Shelter-in-Place”** is used when a threat is **in the community** and may be near a school—external doors are locked to keep the threat out. If you or a loved one encounters a school where one of these events is in progress, please return to your vehicle and leave the area until the situation is resolved. If you are inside one of the schools or District buildings when one of the events is unfolding, you will be instructed on procedures to follow by Administrators and/or staff. Allow first responders to do their work safely and efficiently. For accurate, real-time updates, monitor local radio stations and follow Great Falls Public Schools and Great Falls Police Department social media channels.

Heroic Partnerships – Fostering strong connections between our schools and the community.

- The annual Worlds of Work (WOW) Career Expo, a flagship event by Central Montana Works, recently lit up the path for the region's future talent, on September 23, 2025. This inspiring initiative brought together local industries and over 200 dedicated community volunteers in a powerful collaboration, offering a truly hands-on experience for over 2,000 8th and 10th graders. By transforming the campuses of Great Falls College MSU and the University of Providence into interactive career zones, WOW allowed students to explore the diverse, well-paying, and in-demand fields available right here in the Great Falls area. Thank you to our industry partners for helping the next generation of graduates by helping them dream big and "grow our own" workforce.

Helping Hands Needed – Helping grow the talent and dedication of Speech and Debate.

- Great Falls Public Schools invites enthusiastic community members to volunteer as judges for our upcoming Speech and Debate tournaments on November 14th and 15th! No prior experience is required—just bring your willingness to listen carefully, provide constructive feedback, and support our talented students as they strengthen their communication and

critical thinking skills. Your time and insight will make a lasting impact on the confidence and growth of young speakers and debaters. To learn more or sign up, visit <https://www.cmrspeech.com/judge>.

Heartfelt Commitment – Building What Matters (motto for 2025).

- At Great Falls Public Schools, our work is grounded in heartfelt commitment—building what truly matters for our students, staff, and community. Whether it’s strengthening academic programs, expanding opportunities, or nurturing belonging, our focus remains on people first. We are inspired by Jesse Cole’s “One Fan at a Time” philosophy from *Fans First*, which reminds us that meaningful change and lasting impact come through genuine relationships and intentional care. Every connection we make—with a student, colleague, or community partner—builds the foundation for something greater. Together, we continue to create schools and experiences that leave a lasting, positive impression when we “Build What Matters”—one student, one family, and one person at a time.

Warm regards,

Heather Hoyer
Superintendent, Great Falls Public Schools

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