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 November 10, 2025. Chair Scott Walter called the meeting to order at 5:35 pm.

Attendance and Introduction of Board Members

Trustees Present: Chair Scott Walter, Vice Chair Tyrel Murfitt, Tristan Ulmer, Tiffany Richardson, Martin Balukas, Stacy Baird, and Mark Diehl

Superintendent Dan Rispens, Clerk Jill Hoogerheide, Athletics Director Shaun Murgel, and Student Representative, Xavier Nunn

Visitors: Jen Cordell, Juliet Hahn, Bret Charlton, Breanna Humphrey-Gilbert, Denise Feller, Kate Johnson, Paayton Fleurisma, Coco Riddle, Sam Wigen, Maya Guenzel, Tara Harrington, Greg Wirth, Mark Runkle, Megan Hernandez, Kyndal Lowrie, Chloe Copenhaver, Timber Hernandez, Nick Edlund, Patrica Gillett, Cole Bass, Krysti Krall, Nikki Tiewater, Cindy Seller

Review the Agenda

No comments from the Board.

Hear the Public

Juliette Hahn spoke favorably about the flag football team at EHHS and her hope that East Helena continues to offer the activity.

Paayton Fleurisma expressed her feelings about how valuable flag football has been for her as a member on the EHHS team.

Chloe Copenhaver spoke about how valuable flag football has been for her as a member.

No other public comments.

Reports

Student Report

Xavier Nunn said he believes the EHHS students are doing well and just marked the end of the first quarter. He reported that the Speech, Drama and Debate team started up and that they have had a few meets already with more next month. Volleyball has ended their season with eight wins and eight losses, which is the best record so far. The district was also able to host the recent divisional tournament. Football has been extraordinarily successful, and we hosted our first ever playoff game against Glendive. We won that game, went on to play Columbia Falls in the quarter finals and beat

them in a close game. The pep bus went to the game which was incredibly fun and next week we play Billings Central in the semi-finals. If we win that game, we will go on to the state finals which will be extremely exciting. Coming up next month our Winter sports will start soon, including basketball, wrestling, and swimming.

Denise Feller asked to make her public comment now since she misunderstood the previous prompt. She wanted to speak about the Radley basketball hoops in the school gyms.

Administrator Reports

Eastgate and Prickly Pear Principal Crusat reported that it has been a good month. He highlighted the Olweus assembly, a buddy class activity and safety items. He also introduced Matt Krantz as an Admin intern and let the Board know that Matt would be reporting as well.

Matth Krantz reported for Eastgate, Prickly Pear and Radley. He stated that the fall folk dance night in September had the highest attendance rating ever. He attributed this to staff collaboration and support.

Radley Principal Somerfeld did not have a lot of additional items to add to his board report. He wanted to introduce Kaitlyn Lesofskie (third grade) and Tara Harrington (fourth grade), and Jessica Clanin as the new Special Ed teacher. Meckenzie Arnold and Amber Countryman could not attend but are also new teachers for Radley.

EVMS Principal Morris reported her new staff for this year. Maya Guenzel is the new computer teacher, and Jack Prka was hired as the science teacher. Both are doing well. She also mentioned that EVMS only has out-of-school suspension due to a lack of available staff to cover in-school suspensions.

EVMS Vice Principal Kemper had nothing additional to Board report.

Trustee Baird had a question about in-school detention.

EHHS Principal Condon introduced his new staff: Nick Edlund is the Business Studies teacher who is also running the DECA club. Sam Wigen in her second year as the AG teacher also running the FFA club, and Patrica Gillett has returned to teaching Business Studies this year. Principal Condon also said he believed the high school football game on Friday was "quite the spectacle."

Chair Walter had questions about the Board report regarding Carroll College parking comments for graduation ceremony. He also had questions about taking students on site visits.

Principal Condon explained some of the reasons why this affected our graduation time and the change of venue.

Superintendent Rispens explained that Jill Hayter, our new Advanced Opportunity Facilitator, has taken at least fifteen kids with around sixty or so trips.

EHHS Vice Principal Klock referenced her Board report. She wanted to highlight the MTSS committee that is working on improvement of attendance and the discipline incidences mostly occurring due to absenteeism. Divisional volleyball ran a magnificent event with some of the largest crowds she has ever seen. There were a lot of comments from others about our student behavior (exceptionally good) and the staff being so helpful. She was immensely proud of her school and sent out a huge thank you to all of them.

Trustee Baird had some questions regarding attendance and times they have noticed high absenteeism.

Vice Principal Klock stated that the staff sees the high attendance issues occurring mostly around lunch and early morning class periods.

Athletics Director Murgel spoke about winter parent night happening tomorrow in the high school gym. He is also excited for football season and a great Fall.

Trustee Richardson had a question for Vice Principal Klock regarding the school day at EHHS.

Vice Principal Klock explained that they did not intend to extend the school day.

Trustee and Committee Reports of the K-12 Board

Chair Walter solicited reports from the Trustees and Committees.

Trustee Baird spoke a bit about the Calendar committee and the hopes of having a meeting scheduled soon. There have been requests for more information regarding the four-day school week discussion.

No other reports from the Committees and Trustees.

Strategic Planning – Scan for Future Needs

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

Superintendent Rispens asked the Board if they could schedule a time with Deborah Silk at MTSBA to go over policy and procedures in March. The review could take more than a normal Board meeting time.

Chair Walter spoke about the October 22nd meeting for the Helena MPO. There was an open house in Helena and one in East Helena on the 22nd. Board Chair Walter and Vice Chair Murfitt both attended the meeting in East Helena. Vice Chair, Murfitt said the discussion was extremely high level and mostly talked about improvements, expected growth and preferences for mass transit.

Notifications of Retirements and Resignations

The Following Staff Resignations Have Previously Been Accepted:

- Rachel Case Paraprofessional
- Trina Ereth Instructional Tutor

Consent Action Items

Minutes of the Regular Meeting October 13, 2025

Approval of the former and new warrants (Claims #51458 - #51548) and (Payroll # 69769 - # 69970)

Personnel Actions

Recommended Employment of Staff

- Rachel Case Substitute
- Darlene Jatkowski Paraprofessional
- Deb Ryan Paraprofessional
- Krystl Smith Head Softball Coach
- Marianne Baumeister Substitute
- Savannah Baker Substitute
- Amy Eickert Substitute
- Denise Johnson Substitute
- Jack Prka EVMS Boys Basketball Coach
- Duncan Kraft EVMS Boys Basketball Coach
- Kenzie Lombardi EHHS Assistant Speech & Debate Coach
- Pailey Lampers Student Mentor

East Helena School District Students Requesting Enrollment in Other School Districts for the 2025-2026 School Year

	Helena	Jefferson High	MT City	Clancy	Townsend
MM (PreK)	1				
Kindergarten					
1st grade					
2nd grade	2				
3rd grade					
4th grade					
5th grade	1				
6th grade					
7th grade					
8th grade	1				
9th grade					
10th grade					
11th grade					
12th grade	4				

Total: 9

Motion by Vice Chair Murfitt, seconded by Trustee Richardson to approve the Consent Action Items as presented. Unanimous vote for the motion. The motion carries.

Unfinished Business

MCEL Reflections

Lynsi thought that the conference had quite a bit of sessions that were geared towards Principals.

Superintendent Rispens spoke about some of the legislation that he learned about that he had not heard before. One new piece of legislation was about multi-district agreements district-wide and some of the opportunities and pit falls that could occur.

Resolution #242 Obsolete and Unusable Equipment – Bid Opening

The bids were opened for the obsolete equipment in resolution 242.

Ken Leistiko bid $200 for the John Deere mower with attachment.
Rick Lesitiko bid $200 for the Chevy van.

Motion by Vice Chair Murfitt, seconded by Trustee Balukas to award the John Deer Mower to Ken Leistiko and the Chevy Van to Rick Leistiko as shown on bids. Unanimous vote for the motion. The motion carries.

Activity Bus Update

Superintendent Rispens updated the Board regarding the status of the activity bus purchases.

New Business

Travel Student Request – University of Idaho, 2026

Cole Bass spoke to the Board regarding a request from the EHHS Jazz Band to travel to University of Idaho in April of 2026 to attend the Lynel Hampton Jazz Festival.

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

Student Travel Club Request – England and Scottland 2027

The EHHS Travel Club requested approval for a trip to London, England, and Scotland in June 2027. Teachers Rebecca Bergman, Breanna Humphrey-Gilbert, and Bret Charlton addressed the Board.

Motion by Trustee Ulmer, seconded by Vice Chair Murfitt to approve the EHHS Travel Club request. Unanimous vote for the motion. The motion carries.

Student Activity Account Request – Huschka Haberdashery (EHHS Student Store)

Superintendent Rispens presented a request for a student activity account for the Huschka Haberdashery.

Motion by Vice Chair Murfitt, seconded by Trustee Baird to approve the Huschka Haberdashery student account. Unanimous vote for the motion. The motion carries.

MVM Street Easement – City of Helena

Superintendent Rispens reported that the district has been asked to grant a street easement to the City of Helena for our property in Mountain View Meadow.

Motion by Vice Chair Murfitt, seconded by Trustee Balukas to approve the easement for utilities and transportation with language stricken from part four that removes the risk of at owner expense and authorize Chair Walter to sign once the language is stricken.

Unanimous vote for the motion. The motion carries.

Resolution 243 – Obsolete and Unusable Equipment

Superintendent Rispens presented a resolution to declare the 1989 MCI Activity bus obsolete and unusable due to repairs needed that exceed the value of the bus.

Motion by Vice Chair Murfitt, seconded by Trustee Ulmer to approve Resolution 243. Unanimous vote for the motion. The motion carries.

Initiative to name the EHHS Football Stadium

Superintendent Rispens spoke to the Board about naming the EHHS Athletic Stadium to build community pride and reduce confusion.

Motion by Trustee Ulmer, seconded by Trustee Richardson to direct the Superintendent to start the process to name the stadium. The motion carries.

EHPS Budgetary Update and Projections

Superintendent Rispens updated the Board regarding budget projections for next year.

Review of Changes to MT Election Laws and Timelines

Clerk, Hoogerheide updated the Board on some of the new deadlines and changes to the election laws.

Distribution of Superintendent's Evaluation

Chair Walter handed out paper copies of the Superintendent's evaluation. He is requesting them back by December 10th.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:36 p.m.

Future Meeting Dates and Agenda Items

The next regular meeting will be held on Monday, December 8th, at 5:30 Prickly Pear Elementary

Submitted by: Jill Hoogerheide 12/04/25

Board Clerk, Jill Hoogerheide Date

Approved by: Scott A. Walter DEC. 8, 2025

Chair, Board of Trustees Date