

## **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 regular meeting on March 9, 2026. Chairman Walter called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

#### **In Attendance**

Trustees Present: Chairman Scott Walter, Vice Chair Tyrel Murfitt, Stacy Baird, Tiffany Richardson, Tristan Ulmer, Mark Diehl and Martin Balukas (arrived at 5:31 PM).

Superintendent Dan Rispens, Clerk Jane Knudsen, Athletic Director Shaun Murgel, Technology Coordinator Eric Power, District Secretary Jen Cordell and Student Representative Xavier Nunn.

Principals: Gus Somerfeld, Lynsi Morris and Paul Condon. Vice Principals: Michael Kemper and Trish Klock.

Visitors: Jared and Emily Cambridge, Taylor Cohenour, Sarah Sandau, Cooper Dighans, Bret Charlton, Kate Johnsen, Alyssa Salerno, Shana Dachs, Tim Baird, Sydney Baird, Cole Bass, Juliet Hahn, Jason Walker, Chloe Corelu and other members of the Stadium Naming Committee, Gary and Laiken Grosskopf, Christa Schoenfeld, Sarah Cobb, Jana Nygaard and Tamika Schoppe. Jon Moore, Aaron and Vonnie Strong, Tricia Haines, Katherine Senecal and Ashley Linder. Members of the EHHS Speech and Drama Team, Wrestling Team and Swim Team. Other members of the public were also in attendance.

#### **Review the Agenda**

No comments from the Board.

#### **Hear the Public**

Several people spoke in favor of a seven-period day instead of the current block period.

#### **Reports**

##### **Student Report**

Student Representative Xavier Nunn introduced the coaches and athletes who participated in winter sports. Prom is coming up. Senior Valedictorians and Salutatorians were announced. Spring sports will start next week.

##### **Administrator Reports**

The individual Principals, the Athletic Director and Technology Coordinator provided their reports as part of the board packet.

#### **Trustee and Committee Reports of the K – 12 Board**

The first strategic planning meeting was Feb 24, 2026. Meetings scheduled for March 3 and 10 were cancelled. Possible date of April 7 to reschedule.

Chairman Walter will be attending the COSSBA Board of Directors and National Conference.

#### **Strategic Planning – Scan for Future Needs**

First session went well with great discussion. The follow-up meeting should wrap up the discussion from which Debra Silk will put together the report to be presented at a future Board meeting.

Facilities/Long Term Planning – possible meeting date of April 27, 2026 for the long term infrastructure meeting. Shaun Murgel has been participating in a community planning process through MBAC and the Chamber of Commerce of East Helena on behalf of the school district.

### **Notifications of Retirements and Resignations**

The Following Staff Resignations Have Previously Been Accepted:

|            |          |
|------------|----------|
| Anna Reiff | -Teacher |
| Jack Prka  | -Teacher |

### **Consent Action Items**

Minutes of Regular Meeting February 9, 2026

Approval of Former & New Warrants (Claims #51712-51785)

Personnel Actions

Surrounding School District Student Enrollment Approval

#### **Recommended Employment of Staff:**

- |                     |                                   |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------|
| • Kyler Halverson   | -Substitute Bus Driver            |
| • Derek Bonogofsky  | -Substitute Bus Driver            |
| • Holden Stagg      | -Substitute Bus Driver            |
| • Gus Somerfeld     | -K-5 Summer Program Administrator |
| • Matt Krantz       | -K-5 Summer Program Administrator |
| • Amy Pollington    | -Summer School Lead Teacher       |
| • Jenni Krause      | -Summer School Lead Teacher       |
| • Jayden Quinn      | -Assistant Softball Coach         |
| • Ethan Hoffman     | -Head Baseball Coach              |
| • Layne Snarr       | -Assistant Baseball Coach         |
| • Ron Henze         | -Assistant Baseball Coach         |
| • Ty Walker         | -Assistant Baseball Coach         |
| • Jon Moore         | -Head Track Coach                 |
| • Bret Charlton     | -Assistant Track Coach            |
| • Nathaniel Bailey  | -Assistant Track Coach            |
| • Alex Reid         | -Assistant Track Coach            |
| • Tom Banks         | -Head Tennis Coach                |
| • Thaddius Burrkarl | -Assistant Tennis Coach           |
| • Bonnie Jones      | -Substitute                       |
| • Mikaela Uhl       | -Substitute                       |
| • Miriam Horner     | -Substitute                       |
| • Troy Arntson      | -EVMS Head Track Coach            |
| • Tricia Haines     | -EVMS Assistant Track Coach       |
| • Nikki Odegard     | -EVMS Assistant Track Coach       |
| • Alexis Cooney     | -EVMS Assistant Track Coach       |
| • Tess Prendergast  | -EVMS Assistant Track Coach       |
| • Kylene Ruth       | -Assistant Flag Football Coach    |

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

Helena Boulder

|        |   |
|--------|---|
| 9th    | 1 |
| 11th   | 1 |
| Total: | 3 |

Editorial clarification by Chairman Walter: The warrant numbers were not included and the \$250 million shortfall is for the Montana State Legislative budget.

**Motion by Vice Chair Murfitt, seconded by Trustee Baird to approve the Consent Action Items as presented. Unanimous vote for the motion. Motion Carries.**

## **Unfinished Business**

### Naming of the EHHS Football Stadium - Committee Report and Board Action

Juliet Hahn, representing the stadium naming committee, shared they met four times, polled the schools and community, and narrowed the list to three choices. The three names are: Devil's Brigade Stadium, Smelter Stadium and 227 Stadium. Trustee Ulmer asked for the polling numbers. Total votes: 384. 227: 92 votes. Smelter: 62 votes. Devil's Brigade: 46 votes.

Chairman Walter stated the Board would vote on all three names, throw out the least popular and then entertain a motion to pick the final name. 227: Trustees Baird, Diehl, Balukas, Richardson, Ulmer, and Vice Chair Murfitt. Devil's Brigade: Chairman Walter. Smelter: none.

**Motion by Trustee Baird, seconded by Trustee Richardson to approve 227 Stadium as the stadium name. Unanimous vote for the motion. Motion Carries.**

### Harmony Education Services - Contract Consideration

This contract has been reviewed by the team at Harmony and revised to correct the concerns raised last month. Harmony was also fine with any other changes we would want to make. Dan stated the changes he made and also took note of suggested changes from the Board.

Public comment: Parents who currently use Harmony spoke on their experience with the education service.

**Motion by Vice Chair Murfitt, seconded by Chairman Walter to approve the Harmony Education Services contract.**

**Motion by Trustee Ulmer, seconded by Trustee Richardson to amend the original motion to remove the 2026-2027 effective term date. This motion passed 6-1 with the vote as follows: FOR: Trustees Richardson, Ulmer, Baird, Balukas, Diehl and Chairman Walter. AGAINST: Vice Chair Murfitt.**

**Unanimous vote for the amended motion to approve the Harmony Education Services Contract. Motion Carries.**

### Policy Revisions - Second Reading: #2600, 3665, 4550, 5122

These Policies were approved last month on first reading and are back on second reading.

**Motion by Vice Chair Murfitt, seconded by Trustee Ulmer to approve Policies: #2600, #3665, #4550 and #5122 on second reading. Unanimous vote for the motion. Motion Carries.**

### Budget Update and Discussion - Mill Levy Consideration

The Superintendent and Business Manager briefed the Board about the budget outlook for next year (Fiscal Year 2027), and the possibility of a mill levy election.

**Motion by Trustee Richardson, seconded by Trustee Balukas to authorize the request for a \$400,000 operations levy.**

**Trustee Richardson withdraws the motion for a \$400,000 operating levy, seconded by Trustee Balukas.**

**Motion by Trustee Richardson, seconded by Trustee Balukas to run a levy for \$392,172. Chairman Walter called a Roll Call vote: FOR: Trustees Baird, Diehl, Balukas, Richardson and Ulmer. AGAINST: Chairman Walter and Vice Chair Murfitt. The motion passed 5-2.**

## **New Business**

### **K-12 Math Curriculum Revision and Adoption**

The District Curriculum Committee presented the math curriculum revisions.

**Motion by Trustee Balukas, seconded by Trustee Baird to adopt the new curriculum as presented. Unanimous vote for the motion. Motion Carries.**

### **K-12 Math Materials Purchase Request**

The District Curriculum Committee has recommended the purchase of new materials for our Littlelantes (4 year olds) and K - 12 to support the new math curriculum.

**Motion by Vice Chair Murfitt, seconded by Trustee Richardson for the purchase of new materials. Unanimous vote for the motion. Motion Carries.**

### **Calendar Committee - Recommendation of Academic Calendar for 2026-27**

The Calendar Committee has completed their work and recommends option #1 for the 26-27 academic calendar.

**Motion by Trustee Ulmer, seconded by Trustee Balukas to approve calendar option #1. Unanimous vote for the motion. Motion Carries.**

### **Non-Resident Application Update**

Trustees were updated regarding non-resident applications for the 26-27 school year.  
No action taken – information item.

### **Superintendent Request for Out of State Travel**

The Superintendent would like to attend a health insurance meeting to represent the District with our large claim re-insurance provider. The Superintendent's contract requires Board approval for work related out of state travel.

**Motion by Trustee Balukas, seconded by Vice Chair Murfitt to approve the Superintendent's out of state travel for the health insurance meeting. Unanimous vote for the motion. Motion Carries.**

### **Notice of Intent Regarding Permissive Levies. - Resolution #245**

This is our required notice to the public of our projected amounts for permissive levies for Fiscal Year 2027. These are estimates, and the final amounts are subject to change prior to August.

Last year we reduced several of these areas based on STARS Funding and to draw down some funds.

**Motion by Trustee Ulmer, seconded by Trustee Richardson to approve Resolution #245, Notice of Intent Regarding Permissive Levies. Unanimous vote for the motion. Motion Carries.**

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:33 PM

The next regular meeting will be held on April 13, 2026 at the EVMS Library.

Submitted by:  Date: 4-13-2026  
District Clerk, Jane Knudsen

Approved by:  Date: APRIL 13, 2026  
Chairman, EHPS Board of Trustees

