

Hellgate Elementary Board of Trustees

Regular Meeting June 8, 2026

6:00 p.m.

OPENING

The Board of Trustees of Hellgate Elementary School District #4 met in regular session on Monday, June 8, 2026. The meeting was held in-person. The meeting was called to order by Board Chairman, Tom McLaughlin. Trustees participating were: Rich Thornock, Jacquelyn Ryan, Kallie Gatzemeier, Beth Herron, and Scott Rouse. Trustee Tom Cook was absent for the meeting. Superintendent Molly Blakely and District Clerk Justine Reese were present for the meeting. District staff participating included Brent Heist (Building 1 Principal), Tiffany Hobbs (Building 3 Principal), Julie McCarthy-McLavery (Building 2 Principal), Brendan Brown (Special Services Director), Haley Patzner (Dean of Students), Erin Ellis (Curriculum Coordinator), Kristen Cottom (Teacher and HEEA President). Community members in attendance included: Willis Curdy (Senate District 49). There were up to 16 total guests/participants in the meeting, in-person.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Willis Curdy provided the Trustees with an introduction. He represents Senate District 49 which covers a portion of Hellgate Elementary district. Previously he was a teacher at Hellgate High School and was a mentor teacher to Julie McCarthy-McLavery, Building 2 Principal.

HEEA

Kristen Cottom provided an update to the Trustees. On behalf of the HEEA she thanked the Trustees, parents, students, administrative team and Superintendent for a great school year.

RECOGNITION OF STUDENTS AND STAFF

There was no recognition at this meeting.

BOARD CORRESPONDENCE

Trustees reviewed the monthly newsletter from OPI.

REVIEW OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING ON 5/11/26

A motion was made by Kallie Gatzemeier to approve the minutes from the May 11, 2026 regular meeting. The motion was seconded by Scott Rouse. There was no discussion on the item. Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Scott Rouse, Beth Herron, Jacquelyn Ryan, and Kallie Gatzemeier. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

REVIEW OF THE MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING 5/18/26

A motion was made by Beth Herron to approve the minutes from the May 18, 2026 special meeting. The motion was seconded by Scott Rouse. There was no discussion on the item. Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Scott Rouse, Beth Herron, Jacquelyn Ryan, and Kallie Gatzemeier. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

REVIEW OF THE WARRANTS-MAY 2026

A motion was made by Scott Rouse to approve the May 2026 claims. The motion was seconded by Jacquelyn Ryan. There was clarification regarding the Building 3 roof expenses linked to mold remediation. Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Scott Rouse, Beth Herron, Jacquelyn Ryan, and Kallie Gatzemeier. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

REVIEW OF STUDENT ACTIVITIES

A motion was made by Scott Rouse to approve the May 2026 Student Activities Report. The motion was seconded by Beth Herron. There was no discussion on the item. Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Scott Rouse, Beth Herron, Jacquelyn Ryan, Kallie Gatzemeier. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

REVIEW OF THE BUDGET REPORT

Trustees reviewed the budget reports for May 2026.

CERTIFIED STAFF HIRING CONSIDERATION

A motion was made by Jacquelyn Ryan to accept the hiring of Ms. Zoe Sullivan, Speech Language Pathologist and Mr. Thomas Houska, Industrial Arts teacher, for the 2026-2027 school year. The motion was seconded by Kallie Gatzemeier. There was no discussion on the item. Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Scott Rouse,

Beth Herron, Jacquelyn Ryan, and Kallie Gatzemeier. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

CERTIFIED STAFF RESIGNATION

A motion was made by Beth Herron to accept the resignation of Ms. Cailen Bosch. Speech-Language Pathologist, effective June 10, 2026 (letter available in official board packet). The motion was seconded by Jacquelyn Ryan. There was no discussion on the item. Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Scott Rouse, Beth Herron, Jacquelyn Ryan, and Kallie Gatzemeier. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

CLASSIFIED STAFF RESIGNATIONS

A motion was made by Jacquelyn Ryan to accept the resignation of Ms. Diane Thornock, paraprofessional, and Ms. Natalee Rod, paraprofessional, effective June 10, 2026 (letters available in official board packet). The motion was seconded by Kallie Gatzemeier. There was no discussion on the item. Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Scott Rouse, Beth Herron, Jacquelyn Ryan, and Kallie Gatzemeier. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

EXTENDED YEAR CONTRACT CONSIDERATION

A motion was made by Jacquelyn Ryan to offer contracts to the following staff for our ESY program: Teacher: Lauren Dunlap, Kelsey Ostrander (Sub), Mikel Hoffman (Sub), Speech: Sydney Louvar, Paras: Ashlyn Schatz-Eason, Kami Bourke, Jade Brooks, Amy Swearingin. The motion was seconded by Scott Rouse. There was brief discussion about when the program begins. The program starts in July 2026. Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Scott Rouse, Beth Herron, Jacquelyn Ryan, and Kallie Gatzemeier. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

SUBSTITUTE HIRE CONSIDERATION

A motion was made by Jacquelyn Ryan to hire the following substitutes for the 2026-2027 school year: Ella DeFrance and Adeline Taylor. The motion was seconded by Kallie Gatzemeier. There was no discussion on the item. Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Scott Rouse, Beth Herron, Jacquelyn Ryan, and Kallie Gatzemeier. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

ADOPT INVESTMENT RESOLUTION

A motion was made by Rich Thornock to adopt a resolution to participate in the Montana Board of Investments Short-Term Investment Pool (STIP), effective July 1, 2026. The motion was seconded by Jacquelyn Ryan. Justine Reese provided a brief background on the item. She noted Hellgate elementary currently participates in the MT STIP through the Missoula County Treasurer Department. Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Scott Rouse, Beth Herron, Jacquelyn Ryan, and Kallie Gatzemeier. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

DISTRICT PARTICIPATION IN MONTANA COOPERATIVE SERVICES (MCS)

A motion was made by Scott Rouse to approve the District's participation in the Montana Cooperative Services (MCS), effective June 8, 2026, through the end of the 2026–2027 school year. The cost to participate is \$1.00 per student, with a maximum annual amount of \$1,200.00. The intent of the membership is to capitalize on the cooperative purchasing opportunities that MCS can offer pursuant to 20-9-204(4), MCA. The motion was seconded by Beth Herron. There was no discussion on the item. Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Scott Rouse, Beth Herron, Jacquelyn Ryan, and Kallie Gatzemeier. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT PURCHASE CONSIDERATION

A motion was made by Jacquelyn Ryan to approve the purchase of playground equipment and installation for Building 2 from the Montana School Equipment Company (full detail available in official board packet). The motion was seconded by Kallie Gatzemeier. Superintendent Blakely noted that all funds had been donated or grant funded in order to fund the entire purchase and installation of the new playground. She is hopeful the playground will be complete prior to the start of the school year. Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Scott Rouse, Beth Herron, Jacquelyn Ryan, Kallie Gatzemeier. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF 2026-2027 SCHOOL BUS MILEAGE ROUTES

A motion was made by Jacquelyn Ryan to approve the Hellgate Elementary school bus route mileage for the 2026-2027 school year (mileage detail included in official board packet). The motion was seconded by Rich Thornock. There was no discussion on the item. Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Scott Rouse, Beth Herron, Jacquelyn Ryan, Kallie Gatzemeier. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVE CHILDCARE LEASE AGREEMENT

A motion was made by Jacquelyn Ryan to approve the Childcare Lease Agreement between Hellgate Elementary and Roo's Rascals Daycare, LLC, effective date of July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027 (complete agreement available in official board packet). The motion was seconded by Kallie Gatzemeier. There was clarification requested regarding the building improvements and what that entailed. Kristen Cottom noted the teachers are very excited for the close proximity childcare. Kaleva law drafted and reviewed the final lease agreement. Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Scott Rouse, Beth Herron, Jacquelyn Ryan, Kallie Gatzemeier. Voting against the motion

were none. The motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION ITEMS/ANNOUNCEMENTS:

District Screen Time Policy: Superintendent Blakely discussed with the Trustees a potential policy regarding screen time timeframes in the classroom. All Trustees were in favor of seeing a draft policy at the next regular board meeting.

Facility Use Fee for After-School Programs: Superintendent Blakely would like to implement a facility use fee for after-school programs, potentially \$20.00-\$25.00 per hour. The fee would offset the overhead cost of the programs in the buildings. The Trustees were in favor and anticipate the final recommendation at the next regular board meeting.

MTSS District Cohort OPI Grant: Brendan Brown applied for and was awarded a MTSS District Cohort grant to support the special services department at Hellgate Elementary.

Scheels and Walmart donation: Both companies donated in total, 12 strider bikers for the Building 2 playground.

Security Grant-Albert Sensor Network Monitoring and Management: The grant provides a server and monitors for malicious cyber activity.

In-Tune Donation from the Rotary Club \$2,750.00: Generous donation was received to eliminate the fee barrier for students who are unable to afford the instrumental rental fee.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

There were no committee reports at the meeting.

PRINCIPALS' REPORTS

Building 1: Brent Heist provided the Trustees with an update-lots of end of year excitement. He is grateful for the collaboration districtwide, it has been memorable and highly rewarding. Thank you to Amber Barksdale for hosting the employee BBQ on the last day of school.

Building 2: Julie McCarthy-McLavery provided the Trustees with an update-Track and Field days are coming up, students and teachers are excited for summer.

Building 3: Tiffany Hobbs provided the Trustees with an update-Thank you to Mr. Byers for a successful Track and Field day, Law Enforcement Appreciation Day was successful and the Highschool graduation walk was a big success.

Building 4: Absent

Special Services: Brendan Brown provided the Trustees with an update-the collaboration this school year has been amazing. He thanked the Trustees for the support they offer to the special services department.

Curriculum: Erin Ellis provided an overview of the end of year testing processes and curriculum review. Overall, the district showed successful math and reading scores with significant improvement throughout the year.

NEXT MEETING DATE:

The next regular meeting of the Board will be July 13, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

There was no public comment.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 pm.

Tom McLaughlin, Board Chair

Justine Reese, Business Manager/Clerk