Hellgate Elementary Board of Trustees
Regular Meeting October 12, 2026
6:00 p.m.

OPENING

The Board of Trustees of Hellgate Elementary School District #4 met in regular session on Monday, October 12, 2026. The meeting was held in-person. The meeting was called to order by Board Chairman, Tom McLaughlin. Trustees participating were: Rich Thornock, Kallie Gatzemeier, Jacquelyn Ryan, Scott Rouse, Beth Herron, and Tom Cook. Superintendent Molly Blakely and District Clerk Justine Reese were present for the meeting. District staff participating included Brent Heist (Building 1 Principal), Haley Patzner (Dean of Students), Julia McCarthy-McLaverty (Building 2 Principal). There were no community members in attendance. There were up to 12 total guests/participants in the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment at the meeting.

HEEA

There was no HEEA representation at the meeting.

RECOGNITION OF STUDENTS AND STAFF

There was no recognition of students and staff at the meeting.

BOARD CORRESPONDENCE

Trustees reviewed the monthly newsletter from OPI.

REVIEW OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING ON 9/14/26

A motion was made by Kallie Gatzemeier to approve the minutes from the September 14, 2026 regular meeting. The motion was seconded by Jacquelyn Ryan. There was no discussion on the regular meeting minutes. Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Scott Rouse, Jacquelyn Ryan, Beth Herron, Tom Cook, and Kallie Gatzemeier. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

REVIEW OF THE WARRANTS-SEPTEMBER 2026

A motion was made by Rich Thornock to approve the September 2026 claims. The motion was seconded by Scott Rouse. There was brief discussion related to clarifying the asbestos test expense. Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Scott Rouse, Jacquelyn Ryan, Beth Herron, Tom Cook, and Kallie Gatzemeier. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

REVIEW OF STUDENT ACTIVITIES

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

REVIEW OF THE BUDGET REPORT

Trustees reviewed the budget reports for September 2026.

APPROVAL OF SUBSTITUTE LIST

A motion was made by Rich Thornock to approve the following new substitutes for the 2026-2027 school year: Anna Guga, Kristi Shapira, Taylor DuBois, Hareem Omer, Brooks Nelson, and Brynne Smith. The motion was seconded by Scott Rouse. There was no discussion on the hiring of the new substitutes. Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Scott Rouse, Jacquelyn Ryan, Beth Herron, Tom Cook, and Kallie Gatzemeier. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

OUT OF DISTRICT STUDENT APPROVAL CONSIDERATION

A motion was made by Scott Rouse to approve the following out-of-district student who began the 2026-2027 school year as an in-district student, but has since moved out of the district (Board Policy #3141): AG 4th grade. 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, Jacquelyn Ryan, Beth Herron, Tom Cook, and Kallie Gatzemeier. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

ADOPTION OF SCREEN TIME PROCEDURE CONSIDERATION

A motion was made by Beth Herron to approve the adoption of the proposed Screen Time procedure for Hellgate Elementary School District (complete procedure and background documentation available in official board packet). The motion was seconded by Kallie Gatzemeier. There was a question from the trustees about how this impacts band and orchestra; Superintendent Blakely addressed the question noting band and orchestra are not utilizing screens in the way that the procedure is addressing. The procedure is focused primarily on options provided to students during choice time. Securly, a technology-based security program, allows teachers to safely monitor how technology is being used in their classrooms and encourage individualized learning. Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Scott Rouse, Jacquelyn Ryan, Beth Herron, Tom Cook, and Kallie Gatzemeier. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

HIRING OF ADDITIONAL ROBOTICS ASSISTANT COACH CONSIDERATION

A motion was made by Jacquelyn Ryan to approve the hiring of Dale Asanovich, as an assistant coach for robotics, effective September 28, 2026. The motion was seconded by Rich Thornock. There was a clarifying question asked regarding how many coaches robotics had: 1 head coach and 3 assistants. Voting in favor of the motion were: Tom McLaughlin, Rich Thornock, Scott Rouse, Jacquelyn Ryan, Beth Herron, Tom Cook, and Kallie Gatzemeier. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

HIRING OF GYMNASTICS AND BOYS BASKETBALL COACHES CONSIDERATION

A motion was made by Rich Thornock to approve the hiring of the following coaches.

Gymnastics-Head Coach: Taylor Nordby; Assistant Coaches: Stacey Glenn, Addison Chamberlain, Kim Rudolph
Boys Basketball-Head Coach: Tyler Glenn; Assistant Coaches: Kelsey Salmela, Michael Straw

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

REQUEST TO DISPOSE OF SCHOOL DISTRICT ITEMS/EQUIPMENT

A motion was made by Tom Cook to adopt a resolution (available in official board packet) to allow the district to dispose of obsolete, unusuable/non-repairable equipment, materials, textbooks, library books, and property that are no longer utilized. 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, Jacquelyn Ryan, Beth Herron, Tom Cook, and Kallie Gatzemeier. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF HELLGATE TRANSPORTATION BUS ROUTE MILEAGE CONSIDERATION

A motion was made by Rich Thornock to approve the adjusted Hellgate Transportation school bus route mileage for the 2026-2027 school year (route detail is available in official board packet). 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, Jacquelyn Ryan, Beth Herron, Tom Cook, and Kallie Gatzemeier. Voting against the motion were none. The motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION ITEMS/ANNOUNCEMENTS:

County Spelling Bee: Hellgate Elementary will be hosting the County Spelling Bee spring of 2027. Margaret Finlay will primarily organize the function. Logistically, the Spelling Bee will not impact the normal school day as the contest will likely be held on an early-out Thursday.

Board Training with Kaleva Law has been rescheduled for November 9 at 5:00 p.m. prior to the regular board meeting. Trustee individual and group photos will occur at the November 9 meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

There were no committee reports at the meeting.

PRINCIPALS' REPORTS

Building 1: Brent Heist thanked the nursing staff Kayla and Jessa as they are great to work with. He provided an overview of math testing that just completed in his building and thanked both the Building 1 and district-wide staff for making Hellgate a great place to be.

Building 2: Julia McCarthy-McLaverty thanked the amazing teachers in Building 2. She noted the educational gains of the Early Literacy Program. She noted the students in her building are very excited for Halloween. She reviewed the testing progress in her building. She invited the Trustees to come visit when they have an opportunity.

Building 3: Haley Patzner provided the Trustees with an overview of Building 3. Concert season is just beginning in Building 3. The 6th grade band students participated in the University of Montana Homecoming Parade with the 7th and 8th graders. She reviewed the testing currently underway in Building 3.

Building 4: Absent

Special Services: Absent

Curriculum: Absent

NEXT MEETING DATE:

The next regular meeting of the Board will be November 9, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Jacquelyn Ryan visited the Hellgate Closet and noted how impressed she was and how great the overall atmosphere was-she thanked the district for implementing it. The Hellgate community has been generous with donations.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 6:22 pm.

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Tom McLaughlin, Board Chair Justine Reese, Business Manager/Clerk