



The Helena Public Schools educate, engage, and empower each student to maximize his or her individual potential with the knowledge, skills and character essential to being a responsible citizen and life-long learner.

Board of Trustees – Teaching and Learning Committee Meeting

Wednesday, May 6, 2020 – 12:00pm

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE

Committee: *Others:*

Sarah Sullivan, Committee Chair
Libby Goldes, Committee Member
Siobhan Hathhorn, Committee Member

Terry Beaver, Trustee
Tyler Ream, Superintendent
Josh McKay, Assistant Superintendent
Barb Ridgway, Chief of Staff
Joslyn Davidson, Curriculum & Instruction
Gary Myers, Education Technology Coordinator
Jane Shawn, HEA President
Jamie Bawden, member of the public
Emily Ewart, member of the public
Joe Triem, member of the public

I. CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting was called to order at 12:00pm by Committee Chair, Sarah Sullivan.

II. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Emily Ewart recommended the district adopt a pass/fail options for fourth quarter grading.

III. REVIEW OF AGENDA

No changes were requested.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

No changes were requested to the March 4, 2020 Teaching and Learning committee meeting minutes.

V. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/DISCUSSION

A. Update on Remote Learning

Grading Update: Dr. Ream presented the final draft of the fourth quarter grading piece to the committee, which had been approved at the middle school and high school principals' meetings. He provided background on the grading decision and provided details on the grading update would be communicated with parents, teachers, and principals. As part of

the grading discussion, Dr. Ream said that while typical procedures of determining a reliable and viable grade was based on formal and informal data points on assessment, those procedures were entirely different in a remote environment. Because of this, the decision had been made that high school and middle school students would receive a letter grade with an option to select a credit for the class. A credit would not hinder a student's GPA, but a lot of students would prefer a letter grade since a credit was weighted as a D. Dr. Ream continued that students were encouraged to check with any college to which they were applying to learn how admissions departments will be factoring grading in the 4th quarter of the 2019-2020 school year.

Dr. Ream continued that if students chose an incomplete for a class, they would have two weeks beyond the end of the school year to turn in any missing assignments to earn a credit for the class. If there were any incompletes past June 24, the fail may affect 2020-2021 eligibility based on the guidance provided by Montana High School Association (MHSA).

Dr. Ream told the committee that middle school grading would align to the high schools, but students would have to make a decision prior to June 3 if they wanted to take a credit on the class rather than a letter grade. If middle school students were taking a high school class, they would need to abide by the high school dates for that class.

Ms. Sullivan asked if the FAQ piece would be sent to parents whose student was considering taking a credit for a class. Dr. Ream answered that the piece would be communicated to all parents and added counselors and principals would walk through decisions with their students.

Elementary Grading: Dr. Ream said steps were being taken towards a standards-based report card to provide more feedback on students' progress towards meeting standards/essential skills. A standards-based report card will provide more feedback and will allow next year's teacher more information on what has been mastered and what needs more work. Ms. Hathhorn asked if there was any parent involvement in this process. Dr. Ream answered it was an important piece.

Dr. Ream reviewed the FAQ document with the committee and added that the intent was to do no harm through the grading process. Ms. Goldes asked how the district was memorializing the processes and decisions throughout remote learning. Dr. Ream answered the information was on the website but there may be a more formalized way.

Summer Small Groups: Dr. Ream said the framework for summer considerations would include common expectations and flexibility and added there are a lot of legal and technical issues inhibiting the planning process, specifically mentioning that compensatory time had to be within the 180-day restrictions. The district must make a strategic decision on what learning looks like in the super – perhaps making up for gaps in time and learning. Ms. Hathhorn asked for confirmation that once the district was outside the 180-days, it had more flexibility to provide services, but until then, it was limited. Dr. Ream said that was correct.

VI. BOARD COMMENTS

Ms. Hathhorn asked when the district would begin planning for the fall. Dr. Ream said the district would plan to open in the fall, and there would be options. He added they were making decisions in real time and planning for a fall opening, while thinking ahead and creating options for student who could not return to school.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:12pm by Ms. Sullivan.