



**Superintendent**  
Tyler Ream, Ed. D  
324-2001

**Business Manager**  
Janelle Mickelson  
324-2040

## **Board of Trustees Special Meeting**

RBLC and Zoom

**Thursday October 1, 2020**  
10:00am

### **MINUTES**

#### **ATTENDANCE – Present unless otherwise noted**

Luke Muszkiewicz, Board Chair  
Siobhan Hathhorn, Board Vice Chair  
Terry Beaver, Trustee, excused  
Sarah Sullivan, Trustee  
Jennifer McKee, Trustee  
Elizabeth “Libby” Goldes, Trustee  
Jennifer Walsh, Trustee  
John McEwen, Trustee  
Dr. Tyler Ream, Superintendent  
Jane Shawn, HEA President

#### **I. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chair Luke Muszkiewicz called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### **II. REVIEW OF AGENDA**

No changes.

#### **III. NEW BUSINESS**

##### **A. Items for Information**

##### **1. Search Firm Presentations**

##### **a. Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates**

Presentation by Carolyn McKennan and Jacqueline Horejs. Hazard, Young, Attea and Associates, (HYA) proposes to conduct a national search for talented and highly qualified candidates for the position of

Superintendent of Schools for Helena Public Schools. HYA has conducted over 1,400 searches. The consultants who have been asked to lead this search have completed 80 searches. HYA's success is about people: our Associates, their extensive contacts, and the boards we assist. We build relationships with each new search, expanding our reach and our record of success. During a typical year, HYA conducts 60 – 80 executive searches per year. We find that the large quantity of searches the firm conducts puts us at a competitive advantage with respect to other search firms, in that our search volume places us in more frequent contact with a larger number of potential candidates, many of whom are not actively seeking employment but are then known to us and can thus be recruited when or if an appropriate position arises. We believe that the success rate of the executives hired with our assistance is due in large part to the volume of searches conducted. After more than 1,400 searches in every region of the country, HYA is in possession of a network of unique depth and breadth, and is therefore also in a stronger position to identify individuals who meet the unique and varied needs of the clients we serve. This document serves to clearly outline the specific services, deliverables and costs proposed for the Helena Public Schools. HYA shall provide the following services and deliverables. Due to public health concerns, it is anticipated that many of the search services will be conducted virtually. Conduct a Planning Meeting with the Board and provide a summary of said meeting which will detail the timeline and steps of the search process and decisions made by the Board. Conduct individual interviews, focus groups, and/or stakeholder meetings to gather input from constituent groups as decided by the Board. Offer options for community input via surveys in addition to the above input sessions. (HYA offers an optional research-based survey with detailed analytics for an additional cost or a locally designed survey using an on-line survey tool which is included in the search fee if the district provides translation services.) The survey is entirely optional, and the Board may elect to not do one. Present a Leadership Profile Report to the Board, and propose Desired Characteristics based on the data from the optional survey, interviews with district and community representatives and other material made available to the associates. The Engage Phase consists of designing and planning a process of engaging the Board and stakeholders through individual interviews, online surveys, and focus groups. HYA associates have experience in facilitating these input sessions in a virtual or hybrid environment. Information from these interactions assists the Board in developing a leadership profile and selection criteria that match the priorities of the community and that meet the unique needs of HPS. This disciplined, inclusive and research-based approach ensures all stakeholders have the opportunity to be part of the search process and provides valuable feedback about the school district based on HYA's local research and

professional understanding of the district's standing in the broader marketplace. The development of the Leadership Profile Report allows the search team to focus all recruitment and screening efforts on candidates that meet the skills and talents identified by the stakeholder engagement process. Top ranked candidates will have experience, skills and talents that match those identified by the District. HYA has more experience in identifying quality educational executives than any other firm in the industry. We build relationships with each new search, expanding our reach and our record of success. Members of the firm are active professionally in state and national organizations affording ongoing identification of emerging educational leaders with unusual talent and promise. Both associates proposed to lead the search engage with Superintendents and Assistant Superintendents from many districts throughout the region. HYA publishes all Superintendent vacancies across the nation on its website at no charge to the district, and staff will send frequent announcements regarding the search to all associates. We are confident our team's knowledge and experience will produce an excellent slate of candidates for HPS. The select phase consists of providing the Board with a slate of candidates interviewed by HYA associates using the Leadership Profile. HYA associates are committed to spending the necessary time and energy on the details to find the right candidates to bring to the Board. HYA associates then facilitate the Board interviews and appointment process. The Board's decision to hire or not hire a candidate is at the sole discretion of the Board; the Board takes responsibility for that decision. The transition phase consists of assisting the Board and new Superintendent to assure a successful transition. Appointing a new leader is the first step toward accomplishing organizational and student goals for success. Additional transition services such as goals, setting, Superintendent evaluation, and Governance Team processes and protocols are available for an additional fee based on the number of days required. In consideration for Services, the District will pay to Hazard, Young, Attea and Associates: Consulting Fee for the search in the amount of \$20,000. This fee is due in three installments; 50% will be invoiced upon execution of the contract/agreement. 25% will be invoiced upon presentation of the Leadership Profile Report. 25% will be invoiced upon presentation of the slate. Travel expenses for associates will be borne by the Board (for any non-virtual meetings). If the Board chooses to reimburse candidates for travel, candidates will submit the expenses directly to the district for reimbursement. Based on past experience, HYA has designed advertising packages to maximize exposure for the vacancy. The Board will choose the package that best suits its needs Advertising on the HYA's webpage and social media pages are included in the consulting fee. In addition to the national

advertising on HYA's webpage, we recommend that the Board consider advertising in the American Association of School Superintendents (AASA), EdWeek, and the Montana School Boards publication. Additional professional background checks/executive due diligence services if desired by the Board. The cost ranges from \$1100 - \$1950 per candidate. All search related documents will be provided electronically at no additional cost. Upon the concurrence of the Board, Dr. Carolyn McKennan and Dr. Jacqueline Horejs will conduct the search. Throughout the search process the associates will be available to counsel with the Board about the search. The consultants will assist the Board until the Board determines it has found the right candidate for the position. The candidate appointed with HYA's assistance will not be presented to another Board as a candidate if it would result in the person leaving the District within three years of employment unless the Board provides written authorization to HYA that they may do so. If the Superintendent departs from the position during the first year under any circumstances, or within two years if a majority of the board is still in place and departure is due to dissatisfaction and not personal or familial reasons, HYA will recruit new candidates for the Board at no additional cost barring travel, advertising and due diligence expenses. HYA will agree to match the price of any competitive bid if the bid is for a comparable level of services and support (both time and process).

The boards will customize what they would like as far as the workshops are concerned. The transition service, it would be more advantageous to lump everything together in one package fee instead of separating them into categories. Most Superintendents ask for a coach in their packets because they know HYA.

Break called at 11:25am, resume the Special Board Meeting at 11:41am.

- b. Montana School Boards Association**  
Presented by Debra Silk and Karla Smerker. With Tyler Ream's announcement of his stepping down as Superintendent of Helena Public Schools at the end of this school year and pursuant to your request for information on our Superintendent Search processes, we would welcome the opportunity to assist the Board through the transition of a search for a successor superintendent and in this regard, wanted to be sure that you are familiar with our Superintendent Search Process. As you can see from the information contained below, our search process is designed to help the Board every step of the way while ensuring that the Board makes all the decisions along the way. We have over 45 years of collective experience devoted to assisting Montana K-12 public schools with their superintendent search process. We are well-versed in Montana school law, Montana statutes and administrative rules applicable to the necessary qualifications of Montana superintendents as well as laws, rules and regulations that are

applicable to the employment of Montana Superintendents and open meeting laws as they pertain to the hiring process. We also assist the Board in promoting your District to potential candidates on a statewide and national basis. The level, quality, and value of MTSBA's Superintendent Search Services are unmatched. We have assisted all the AA schools in their searches for superintendents at one point or another. We assisted the Helena Board of Trustees with its hiring of Jack Copps and would welcome the opportunity to assist the Board through your upcoming superintendent search process. The following sets forth the components of the service we offer.

**Step 1 Gathering Information on Specific Needs of District and Promotion of your District and the Helena community** The MTSBA consultants will work with the District to develop the advertisement for the position. As part of this process, we develop a customized brochure promoting the positive attributes of your District and your community.

**Step 2 Advertise the Position** MTSBA will advertise the position in the appropriate venues in-state and out-of-state for the length of time determined by the Board. MTSBA's application materials, which have undergone extensive legal review, will be utilized for the process.

**Step 3 Collection of Applications** MTSBA will collect application materials, prepare a matrix of applicants' qualifications, and prepare application packets for the Board's screening process. MTSBA consultant will attend and guide the Board through the screening process. **Step 4 Online Survey/Focus Groups (Board Choice)**

In order to solicit input from district staff, parents, students, and the community about the qualities they would like in a superintendent, MTSBA will provide the district with the following options:

**Option 1--**MTSBA will develop an online survey link unique to the District, which may be posted on the district website, published in the local paper, or made readily available in another manner (Option 1 is included in the full search contract).

**Option 2--**MTSBA consultant will facilitate focus groups in the District with various stakeholders (Option 2 is available to the district for an additional half day or full day charge, plus expenses).

**Option 3-** MTSBA consultant will assist the District with a combination of Option 1 and Option 2 (Option 3 is available to the district for an additional half day or full day charge, plus expenses).

**Step 5 Screening of Candidates** MTSBA consultant will provide all applications to the Board for screening and will guide the Board through the screening process. MTSBA will share the results of either the online survey or focus group sessions with the Board prior to screening. MTSBA will provide a list of sample interview questions and assist the Board in selection or development of interview questions. MTSBA will coordinate the interview schedule and the candidate's visits to the community in conjunction with the District contact person.

Step 6 Post-Screening; Logistics for Interviews MTSBA consultant will contact finalists to secure interviews. MTSBA will assist finalists with travel arrangements. MTSBA consultant will develop a press release on the finalists selected by the Board.

Step 7 Employment Reference Checks; MTSBA consultant will conduct comprehensive employment reference checks on up to four (4) finalists prior to the interviews.

Step 8 Fingerprint and Criminal Background Checks MTSBA will process and collect criminal background checks on finalist(s) selected by the District at the District's request. (Note: this is an additional option fee service and the District must sign the Addendum to Superintendent Search Contract.)

Step 9 Interview Candidates MTSBA consultant will attend the candidate interviews and will guide the Board through the interview process. After interviews, MTSBA consultant will provide the Board with a reference summary report of the finalists' comprehensive employment reference checks.

Step 10 Offer and Negotiation of Contract MTSBA consultant will contact and officially offer the position to the successful candidate, conveying all terms of the Board's motion. MTSBA consultant will negotiate the terms of an employment contract, in conjunction with the appointed district contact person. MTSBA legal staff will prepare a Superintendent contract to ensure it meets legal standards and reflects the employment terms agreed upon between the Board and the successful candidate. MTSBA will contact candidates not selected on behalf of the Board.

Step 11 Getting off on the Right Foot MTSBA will discuss with the Board the development of a meaningful Superintendent evaluation.

The fee for our Full Search Process is \$7,500 + expenses. Included in this fee structure are up to four (4) consultations with your District/Board by the MTSBA Consultant(s). This typically includes meeting with the Board to discuss details relating to the advertisement, participating in the screening process, and assisting the Board with the interviews of finalists. Your District will save on travel expenses given that MTSBA is headquartered in Helena. Postage and copying fees will only be assessed when excessive. Additional consultations at the request of the District will be charged in accordance with MTSBA's fee structure at \$750 for a half day or \$1,500 for a full day. In-depth reference checks beyond the four finalists included in the contract for services are charged at \$500 per reference check. MTSBA's Superintendent Search Process is a great value for any District. As a member benefit, we offer this service at significantly reduced rates that are designed to save trustees a significant amount of time and money (estimated to be in the \$20,000-\$30,000 range). Our Superintendent Search Services is designed to assist the Board throughout each phase

of the search. This allows the Board to focus on deliberations and decisions in the selection of finalists and ultimately choosing the best candidate to lead the District. Again, we welcome the opportunity to assist your District with its search for a successor superintendent.

Break called at 12:30pm, resume the Special Board Meeting at 12:45pm.

## **B. Items for Action**

1. Selection of a Superintendent search firm and authorization of Board Chair to negotiate the contract.

Board Chair, Mr. Muszkiewicz mentioned that the bottom line is that there is an allocation of expenses for this selection for a search firm. We can choose one of these firms, we can decide to do something else, or we can say we need more time to think about this decision. Extensive discussion about the differences between the search firms. They do basically the same thing, however, with different approaches. Trustee Sullivan pointed out that MTSBA is more appealing as far as the price is concerned, however, HYA does specialize in finding superintendents while MTSBA is a small firm and they wear many hats. When working with them both in the past, HYA was by far the superior of the two. If we are going to bother looking nation-wide, HYA should be used. If we are looking in Montana, then MTSBA would be great. Trustee McKee commented that yes, it seems as if there is a conflict of interest. If MTSBA knows all the Superintendents and the “good, bad, and ugly” without exposing them, then that does not set right. Trustee Goldes has the same concerns as others. Trustee Goldes also asked who is scheduling these interviews; the Board Chair did it last time with HYA. Trustee McEwen added that MTSBA has other duties, however HYA has other clients and we will not get them for 40 hours a week. Trustee Sullivan added that she likes that HYA has the network capabilities if someone is looking for a certain sized district. Trustee Hathhorn said the biggest concerning thing from MTSBA is the unknowns. The question was asked if this is the time for an interim in the district. Dr. Ream explained that he thinks the district should try to have a sustainability in leadership. Interims can help get through a defined amount of time. It is going to matter how fast districts hit the ground running. It is hard to ask someone to give ten years of their life. It should not be delayed another year or two.

**Motion:** Sarah Sullivan moved to select HYA and give the Board Chair the authorization to negotiate the price and contract based on our discussion. Siobhan Hathhorn seconded the motion.

**Public Comment:** None

**Board Comment:** John McEwen stated he would have voted for either one for various reasons. HYA is a solid firm. Trustee Walsh mentioned that if HYA has already done some of this work, it should not have to be paid for twice. The board is asking Chair Muszkiewicz to review the documents thoroughly and come up with a fair solution.

**Vote:** 7-0 The motion carried.

**IV. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT:** *This is the time for comment on public matters that are not on the agenda. Public matters do not include any pending legal matters, private personnel issues, or private student issues. Please do not attempt to address such issues at this time or you will be ruled out of order. The Board cannot enter into a discussion during General Public Comment.*

None.

**V. BOARD COMMENT**

Chair Muszkiewicz reached out for recommendations for how to schedule interviews, logistics behind everything, and possibly form an ad-hoc committee. Trustee Sullivan explained that it is more of a coordination thing that is time consuming. Trustee Sullivan volunteered to take care of it, so there is not a need to hire someone to do the work. Trustee McEwen and Trustee Goldes offered to be on the ad-hoc committee if there is one to be formed. Dr. Ream offered up the District to help however possible.

**VI. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no other topics for future meetings and no public comment on issues not on the agenda, the meeting adjourned at 2:47p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Luke Muszkiewicz, Chair

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Jessica Evans, Recording Secretary

Date