

BOARD MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
January 13, 2026

Jenni Starman, Chairperson, called the meeting of the Board of Trustees of Fort Benton High School and Elementary School Districts to order January 13, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. in the High School Board Room

Members present: Joellyn Clark, Jenni Starman, Brant Hasbrouck, Kyla Wright, Will Scott, Dusty Schuler and Darin Arganbright. A quorum was present.

ROLL CALL

Also present: Pat Hould, Superintendent; Cali O'Hara, Business Manager/Clerk; Russ Axtman, Maintenance Supervisor; Bethany DeBorde, reporter for The River Press; Roxie Benjamin, Elementary Principal; Jamie Ball, Athletic Director; Trevor Vielleux, Alix Reid, Erich Wellman, Will Hucke, Charles Lenington, Keegan Syvrud

Jenni Starman opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

PLEDGE

It was moved by Will Scott, seconded by Joellyn Clark, to approve the amended minutes of the December 11, 2025, regular meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

MINUTES

It was moved by Brant Hasbrouck and seconded by Will Scott, to approve payment of warrants. The motion passed unanimously.

WARRANTS

Payroll: 98557-98606

Claims: 63492-63554

Jenni Starman asked for public comment. None.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Communications to and from the Board. Jenni Reported the board has received a resignation letter from Roxie Allen. She will be greatly missed in our district.

COMMUNICATIONS TO
AND FROM THE BOARD

Jenni Starman, Board Chair- None

BOARD CHAIR REPORT

Roxie Benjamin, Elementary Principal- Reported that the Christmas programs were amazing. Thank you to Peggy Gannon and Eric Lenington for all their hard work. Cooking with Kids classes are still ongoing. The MS/HS Art Club assisted the elementary students with ornament painting, and Santa made a special visit to the school on the 19th of December. A candy gram sale was held to support the playground project, they raised \$472. Vision and hearing screenings were today, thank you to the Lions Club and Jennifer Longfellow. 3rd & 4th grade ski trip will be January 18 and 5/6 trip will be January 30. Winter testing will start next week. See attached.

ELEMENTARY
PRINCIPAL

Jamie Ball, Athletic Director – Winter sports are going strong with basketball, wrestling, speech & drama, and robotics all in full swing. Thank you to the pep band and cheerleaders for participating in the Tech game that was held here on December 19th to honor Hayden Diekhans. Middle School Girl’s Basketball has started and will have their first game Thursday. Thank you to Russ for having the school ready for our games. The annual MHSAA meeting will be in Helena on January 18th. See attached for the proposed new rules that will be voted on by the membership. There was discussion about rejoining the northern C for elementary basketball season, it does look a little different as it will be 5-7th grades able to participate. After the discussion the board would like Jamie to reach out to the AD at Northstar to join the league.

ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

Russ Axtman, Maintenance- Thanked the Elementary school staff and students for helping clean at the school while Dani is away on maternity leave. We are currently searching for an additional elementary school custodian. Thank you to Jordan, Larry and Corey for coming to clean over the Christmas break. The heaters in the HS/MS are installed and working to install the controls, will be completed soon. Thank you to Jamie for all her hard work during all the sporting events. There is a pine tree at the elementary school playground that was damaged from the recent high winds and will likely need to be removed.

MAINTENANCE

Cali O’Hara, District Clerk- Reported the trustee elections are now open for filing. There are two positions open in district #1(Fort Benton), one position open in district #56 (Carter), and one position in district #99(Benton Lake). Trustee filing is open from December 11 through February 9. Potential candidates can obtain a filing form at the district business office. The intercap loan documents are ready to be signed.

CLERK

It was moved by Dusty Schuler and seconded by Brant Hasbrouck, to join Bridged Alliance Health insurance. The motion passed unanimously.

HEALTH INSURANCE

It was moved by Joellyn Clark and seconded by Kyla Wright, to approve the new federal mileage rate of \$0.72. The motion passed unanimously.

FEDERAL MILEAGE

Pat Hould, Superintendent- Reported the district has received 2 applications for superintendent. There is a ½ day PIR day January 23 and no school will be in session. The end of the 2nd quarter/1st semester is Friday, January 16th. The Chouteau County Sheriff’s office will be meeting with our 7th grade students in the “Too Good for Drugs: Maximizing Life Program.” Officer Darby Reardon will be the instructor and the 10-week program will begin on January 28. The 2nd round of MAP testing will begin soon. Students in grades 7-10 will participate in the Montana Prevention Needs Assessment in early February.

SUPERINTENDENT

Committee Reports-

Policy – First reading of policies. Notice form 3600-NF(1), Policy 1401, Policy 2161, Policy 2335, Policy 2700, Policy 3110, Policy 3150, Policy 3600, Policy 4550, Policy 5015, Policy 5321, no on option, Procedure 2158-P(1), Procedure 2161-P(1), Procedure 3600-P(1), Policy 2600, Policy 3665, Policy 5122

It was moved by Joellyn Clark and seconded by Dusty Schuler, to adopt the Gym Rec Access Agreement. The motion passed unanimously.

Personnel Committee meeting January 19th at 5:30p.m to discuss the superintendent applications.

Transportation meeting February 10th at 6:00pm

Resignations- Roxie Allen

Hires-

It was moved by Dusty Schuler and seconded by Will Scott, to approve parent volunteers, Ashley Benjamin, Trent Kauer, Kara Lacinak, Angela Stocksett. The motion passed unanimously. Joellyn Clark abstained.

It was moved by Brant Hasbrouck and seconded by Will Scott, to hire Larry Garlick as an activity bus driver. The motion passed unanimously.

Future Agenda Items-

2ND Reading of Policy.

It was moved by Dusty Schuler and seconded by Brant Hasbrouck, to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

CLERK _____

BOARD CHAIRPERSON _____

COMMITTEE REPORTS

POLICY COMMITTEE
1ST READING OF POLICY

GYM REC ACCESS
AGREEMENT

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

TRANSPORTATION
COMMITTEE

RESIGNATIONS

HIRES

VOLUNTEERS

ACTIVITY BUS DRIVER

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

ADJOURN

ATTEST