Montana Board of Public Education

Public Charter School Application

June 2026

PO Box 200601 • Helena, MT 59620-0601 • (406) 444-6576 • www.bpe.mt.gov

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INTRODUCTION

Title 20, Chapter 6, Part 8, MCA, authorizes the establishment of public charter schools in Montana and tasks the Montana Board of Public Education as the sole entity authorized to enter into public charter contracts with a governing board. There are two types of public charter schools – those operating under an existing local school board and those operating as a new school district under a separate governing board. This Public Charter School Application is for both options.

A public charter school means a public school that has autonomy over decisions including, but not limited to, matters concerning finance, personnel, scheduling, curriculum, and instruction as defined in a public charter contract. Public charter schools are governed by a local school board, or in the case of a governing board other than a local school board, by the governing board of the public charter school district of which the public charter school is a part. Public charter schools are established and operated under the terms of a public charter contract and allow parents to choose to enroll their children. Public charter schools must admit students based on a lottery if more students apply for admission than can be accommodated.

Public charter schools provide a program of education that may include any or all grades from kindergarten through grade 12 and career and technical education programs and operate in pursuit of a specific set of educational objectives as defined in its public charter contract, and must demonstrate a commitment to and robust understanding of personalized and proficiency-based learning.

The evaluation of public charter school applications will focus on whether implementing the proposals in the application will lead to the academic, organizational, and financial performance that are promised in exchange for potential broad flexibility from Montana's education standards. The following criteria and rubric scales will be used to evaluate each application:

- **the applicant demonstrates a commitment to create an innovative public charter school (0-10 points)**
- **the applicant demonstrates a commitment to create a high-performing public charter school (0-10 points)**
- **the applicant demonstrates a commitment to and robust understanding of personalized and proficiency-based learning (0-10 points)**
- **the academic program is consistent with a high-quality public charter school (0-1 points)**
- **the school governance is consistent with a high-quality public charter school (0-1 points)**
- **the business operations are consistent with a high-quality public charter school (0-1 points)**
- **the community support and need is consistent with a high-quality public charter school (0-10 points)**
- **the applicant demonstrates clear and convincing proof of the likelihood of success (0-1 points)**
- **the applicant can open and operate a successful public charter school (0-1 points)**

SUBMISSION PROCEDURES

To facilitate the Montana Board of Public Education's review of public charter school applications, applicants must submit the application to bpe@mt.gov between the dates of October 26-30, 2026, with a deadline of October 30, 2026 at 5PM. All submission materials must be submitted in a single electronic submission. Multiple attachments will not be accepted in the submission. The Board will review the public charter school application, and if determined complete, will facilitate an interview and take public comment on the application. Final approval of the application will take place at the January 2027 Board of Public Education meeting. Please note the timeline on the Board's webpage under the Public Charter School tab.

Please provide a brief, direct response to each question using this application template and limit the application to 26 pages. Any appendices, handbooks, policies, and additional documents will be considered as supporting documentation. Please include links, when possible, and refrain from including lengthier documents.

Please note that submitting a public charter school application does not guarantee approval or that a public charter school contract will be granted. Failure to adhere to any requirements may lead to an incomplete application that is rejected before consideration.

PUBLIC CHARTER APPLICATION
COVER PAGE

Check One: X New Public Charter under existing local school board ___ New Public Charter District

Name of Public Charter School Billings Health Science Academy (BHSA)

Local school district in which the public charter school will be physically located: Billings Public Schools, School District #2, Lincoln Center 415 North 30th Street Billings, MT 59101

Contact Information for the Governing Board Chair

Contact Person: Janna Hafer Billings Public Schools Trustee Chair
Name Title

Contact Address: Lincoln Center, 415 North 30th Street, Billings, MT 59101

Telephone Number: (406)281-5066

E-mail Address: janna.hafer@billingsschools.org

Contact Information for the Person Completing this Application

Contact Person: Christine Simonsen Director of Health Sciences & Community Education
Name Title

Contact Address: Lincoln Center, 415 North 30th Street, Billings, MT 59101

Telephone Number: (406)281-5003

E-mail Address: simonsenc@billingsschools.org

Local Board of Trustee Evidence

Check One: X Approved by existing local school board ___ Refused approval by existing local school board

Provide copy of local school board minutes as evidence.

Please refer to page 35 of this proposal for documentation of the School Board's approval of our request to submit the Billings Health Science Academy proposal to the Montana Board of Public Education. This appears on page 6 of the 14-page "Proceedings of the Board of Trustees, School District No. 2 and Billings High School District No. 2, Regular Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes – October 19, 2026." Because the minutes have not yet been published online, a link is not currently available. The complete minutes are included on pages 31–44 of this proposal.

PUBLIC CHARTER APPLICATION

Name of Public Charter School: **Billings Health Science Academy (BHSA)**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Provide an executive summary with the general purpose and rationale for the creation of the public charter school, and explain how the proposed public charter school is different from a program that you could operate or are currently operating without the public charter designation.

Billings Health Science Academy (BHSA) is a proposed public charter school within Billings Public Schools (BPS), planned to open in August 2027 for students in grades 11–12. Its purpose is to expand access to healthcare education, reduce barriers to college and career success, and help students prepare to serve Montana communities. Billings' role as a regional healthcare hub provides opportunities to connect students with healthcare employers, postsecondary institutions, and workforce partners.

BHSA will build on foundational health science and academic courses available through West High, Senior High, Skyview High, and the Billings Career Center. Through individualized pathways, students may pursue advanced health science coursework, dual credit, industry-recognized certifications, research, and supervised clinical or work-based learning. These experiences will support preparation for immediate employment, associate or bachelor's degrees, and advanced professional study. Proposed offerings will be phased in according to qualified instructor availability, funding, facilities, student eligibility, and partner capacity.

The planned half-day model will allow students to attend BHSA in a morning or afternoon session while maintaining access to graduation requirements, electives, activities, and services at their area high schools. Instruction will emphasize critical concepts, demonstrated proficiency, hands-on learning, and appropriate student supports. A full-time Health Science Career Coach (HSCC) is included in the proposed staffing plan to collaborate with the Director of Health Sciences and guide all BPS students pursuing health science pathways, including those outside BHSA.

Individual health science courses, dual-credit opportunities, and career experiences can—and already do—operate within BPS without charter designation. BHSA's distinction is the establishment of a dedicated school that brings these opportunities together through coordinated leadership, staffing, scheduling, partnerships, student advising, and accountability. Rather than requiring students to navigate separate offerings independently, BHSA will provide a connected pathway linking foundational coursework with advanced study and career preparation.

Public charter designation will formalize this schoolwide model through an approved mission, implementation plan, budget, and performance expectations under BPS governance. It will provide a sustained framework for evaluating student progress, coordinating community resources, and developing future healthcare pathways as needs and resources evolve.

Opening Date: August 2027 Public Charter Term Length: 5 years initially per HB549
Grades to be served: 11-12
Minimum Enrollment Per Year: 90 half-time students
Planned Enrollment Per Year: 90 half-time in Year 1, growing to approximately 108 and possibly more depending on facility space
Maximum Enrollment Per Year: 108, or more, depending on approved capacity of BHSA location/s

During the proposed public charter 5-year term, indicate the specific grade-level programs that you plan to serve:
Check all that apply: ___ Elementary Program ___ Middle Grades Program X High School Program

For each year of the public charter term, estimate the number of students the public charter school plans to serve in each grade:

	Elementary							Middle		High School				
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
Year 1										X	X	45	45	90
Year 2										X	X	45	45	90
Year 3										X	X	50	50	100
Year 4										X	X	54	54	108
Year 5										X	X	54	54	108

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

See Submission Procedures

1. **State the public charter school's mission and vision and describe why this initiative is important to the community it will serve.**

Mission: Billings Health Science Academy inspires, educates, and empowers students from diverse backgrounds to pursue health science careers, develop rigorous academic and technical skills, and contribute to the health of their communities. Through personalized guidance, college credit, industry-recognized credentials, and applied learning, BHSA will prepare students for meaningful employment, continued education, and lifelong success.

Vision: BHSA will cultivate an inclusive culture of excellence where every student can access a clear, personalized pathway from high school to a health science career, postsecondary education, or both. Through strong partnerships with healthcare employers, colleges, and community organizations, students will gain the knowledge, confidence, and experience to pursue their goals and serve Montana communities.

Importance to the Community: As a regional healthcare hub serving Yellowstone Valley and surrounding communities, Billings is uniquely positioned to connect students with a wide range of healthcare careers. BHSA will expand affordable, accessible opportunities for students while helping develop the locally prepared workforce healthcare employers need. Students will benefit from sustained advising, dual-credit coursework, stackable credentials, professional certificates, pre-apprenticeship opportunities developed in partnership with the Montana Department of Labor & Industry, and supervised learning in authentic healthcare settings. These experiences will support pathways from entry-level patient care and technical occupations to further education in advanced clinical, research, and administrative professions, strengthening both students' futures and the region's health and economic vitality.

2. **Identify the targeted student population and the community the public charter school proposes to serve.**

BHSA will serve Billings Public Schools students in grades 11 and 12 who are interested in health science, healthcare, public health, biomedical science, or related careers. Students may complete recommended preparation in grades 9 and 10 at their area high schools or the Billings Career Center, with concurrent coursework available when appropriate. Prerequisites for individual courses will guide placement and readiness.

Recruitment will welcome students across the full range of academic achievement, including first-generation college students, students from populations underrepresented in healthcare, students who may not yet see themselves as college-bound, and students seeking either direct workforce entry or continued education toward advanced professions. Personalized advising will help students identify their interests, assess their readiness, and develop pathways aligned with their goals.

BHSA will serve the Billings community and support the healthcare workforce serving Yellowstone Valley and surrounding Montana communities. Admission will not depend on prior grades, test scores, disability status, English proficiency, income, or previous access to advanced coursework.

3. **Describe plans and timelines for student recruitment and enrollment, including lottery procedures.**

Following charter approval, BPS will publish BHSA recruitment materials and enrollment procedures describing pathways, prerequisites, scheduling, transportation, dual credit, industry-recognized certifications and professional certificates, and work-based learning. Outreach will include high school presentations, family information sessions, district communications, and healthcare and college partners, with targeted outreach to underrepresented students and application assistance for families.

Proposed timeline:

- **January–February 2027:** Finalize recruitment materials, course information, and enrollment procedures. Ideally, publish job descriptions online immediately following charter approval so staff interviews can begin in late winter or early spring.
- **February–March:** Conduct student and family information sessions and continue staff interviews.
- **March 1–April 15:** Accept applications. Area high school counselors and career coaches provide student class choice assistance.
- **Late April:** Conduct publicly noticed lotteries where applications exceed capacity and establish waitlists.
- **Early May:** Notify families and allow 10 business days to confirm enrollment.
- **May–June:** Develop individualized pathways and schedules and fill openings from waitlists.
- **July–August:** Complete enrollment follow-up, coordinate student supports and work-based learning arrangements, provide orientation, and begin instruction with the BPS calendar.

The area school counselors and career coaches will support the DHS with recruitment and information sessions, application assistance, lottery and waitlist administration, family notifications, enrollment confirmations, individualized pathway planning, student scheduling, coordination of supports and work-based learning opportunities, and student and family orientation.

BHSA plans to enroll 90 juniors and seniors in morning and afternoon cohorts. BPS will review a proposed grade-level enrollment structure prioritizing seniors, who have fewer remaining opportunities before graduation. Final procedures will comply with Montana requirements, including statewide eligibility and district-resident preference, and address returning students. Neutral district personnel will oversee and document lotteries. Waitlists will follow lottery order, with late applicants added afterward in the order completed applications are received.

Medical Assisting will initially be limited to seniors to align training and certification completion with graduation. BHSA admission will not guarantee placement in capacity-limited courses; course placement procedures will be published. Before recruitment, BPS will confirm certification and clinical-site requirements, including eligibility for minors, applicable age limits, examination timing, and conversion from provisional to full certification. Advising will support completion of industry-recognized certifications and professional certificates, including required steps after graduation.

4. **Describe the public charter school's academic program, specifically focusing on why it is innovative in your school district. Include plans to formally assess student achievement on an annual basis.**

Billings Health Science Academy (BHSA) will integrate high school graduation requirements with individualized health science pathways for students in grades 11–12. Its innovation within Billings Public Schools (BPS) is the coordinated connection of foundational courses, advanced health science instruction, college coursework, occupational certifications, and supervised work-based learning. Students will have structured opportunities to prepare for immediate employment, postsecondary education, or advanced professional study while responding to regional healthcare workforce needs.

Students will build on suggested or required prerequisite courses offered at their area high schools and the Billings Career Center, including Principles of Biomedical Science, Human Body Systems, Medical Terminology, Basic College Human Biology, Medical Careers, Introduction to the Operating Room, CNA, EMT, and related core and dual-credit courses. Working with counselors and career coaches, students will develop individualized plans that align graduation requirements, career interests, course prerequisites, and postsecondary goals.

Proposed advanced offerings include PLTW (Project Lead the Way) Medical Interventions, Biomedical Innovation beginning in 2028–29, Medical Assisting and Phlebotomy for seniors, Introduction to Healthcare Professions, Behavioral Health, and a supported online CNA option. Future expansion may include dental professions with dental radiography certification opportunities and pharmacy preparation or Pharmacy Technician training. Offerings will be phased in based on funding, qualified and appropriately licensed instructors, facilities, clinical and internship placements, and applicable student eligibility and program requirements.

Courses may provide opportunities to earn occupational certifications in nursing assistance, medical assisting, phlebotomy, and biotechnology through the BACE examination, as well as BLS/CPR, First Aid, and Stop the Bleed training. Students pursuing BACE certification will complete Medical Interventions before enrolling in Biomedical Innovation. Within Biomedical Innovation, students will choose between additional preparation for the BACE examination and a research capstone, with potential mentorship from local university faculty and students, including osteopathic medical students at Rocky Vista University.

Through partnerships with City College/MSU Billings, the University of Montana, Highlands College, and other institutions, students may complete approved 100- and 200-level college courses online or in person with instructional support. Individualized plans will align coursework with prerequisites or degree requirements in fields such as human performance, human services, practical nursing, radiologic technology, paramedicine, and associate-degree nursing. Students completing Medical Interventions may also earn University of Montana BIOH 113 (Human Form & Function II) dual credit by meeting applicable eligibility and course requirements.

BHSA's hybrid, half-day structure will allow students to participate in specialized health science learning while maintaining access to required courses, electives, athletics, activities, and student supports at their area high schools. AM and PM cohorts will bring students together around shared career interests. Clinical experiences, simulations, internships, job shadows, pre-apprenticeships, and capstone projects will connect academic content to authentic healthcare applications, emphasizing critical thinking, problem solving, communication, teamwork, and professional responsibility. Healthcare professionals and postsecondary partners will contribute instruction, mentorship, and career exploration. Eligible seniors may earn 0.5 high school credit per semester through supervised work-based learning, subject to district Workplace Experience Guidelines and placement availability.

BILLINGS PUBLIC SCHOOLS DISTRICT 2
WORKPLACE EXPERIENCE GUIDELINES
2026-27 SCHOOL YEAR

Thank you for your interest in completing a Workplace Experience! Workplace Experiences are opportunities for students to gain work experience in a specific career area. Students will commit to 90 hours per semester for 0.5 credit (5 hours per week) or 180 hours per semester for 1.0 credit (10 hours per week) to earn elective credit. Specific Learning Outcomes will be developed by a career pathway teacher, employer host, and Career Coach to ensure students learn on the job, which might include specific assignments.

It can take time to find an employer host and develop Learning Outcomes, so students interested in a Workplace Experience must submit their application to their Career Coach by the following deadlines:

- **For Spring Semester 2027, submit an application by Friday, December 4, 2026.**
- **For Fall Semester 2027, submit the application by Friday, February 5, 2027.**

Below are the minimum qualifications and information about the process to apply for a Workplace Experience:

Minimum Qualifications:

- Must be a senior
- Must be in good standing and on track to graduate
- Must have completed at least one class in the career area of interest
- Must have a recommendation from a BPS teacher, counselor, or professional staff member
- Must have no disciplinary record resulting in suspension
- Must have reliable transportation to and from the work site

If you meet the minimum qualifications, complete the next steps:

- Identify an area of career interest for the internship
- Meet with your Career Coach
  - Mrs. Berg, Skyview High School, Room 135
  - Ms. Cavanaugh, Career Center, Room 11
  - Mrs. DeLeon, West High School, Counseling Center, Room 105
  - Mrs. McDonald, Senior High School, Room 131A
  - Ms. Morin, Washington Innovation Center, Room 14
- Scan the QR code to submit the Workplace Experience application

***Please note: While the Career Team will make every effort to match qualified students with Workplace Experiences, experiences are not guaranteed. Placements are dependent upon employer availability and various regulations and privacy laws. For example, internships in areas such as accounting or many healthcare areas may not be options. See your Career Coach to discuss opportunities.**

Formal annual assessment of student achievement will include the following:

- **Academic proficiency:** Each course will identify critical concepts, learning standards, and proficiency expectations aligned with BPS requirements and applicable college or certification standards. Teachers will assess achievement through examinations, projects, laboratory activities, and performance assessments using common criteria within each course. Results will be reviewed each semester and summarized annually to identify mastery, learning gaps, and needed instructional adjustments.
- **Progress toward graduation and college goals:** Each semester and annually, BHSA will review high school credits earned, course completion, GPA, attendance, and progress toward graduation. For students enrolled in college courses, the review will also include college credits attempted and earned, course completion, and college GPA.
- **Occupational knowledge and applied skills:** BHSA will annually track participation in and results of applicable certification examinations, including first-attempt and eventual pass rates. Skills demonstrations, clinical competency checklists, work-based learning evaluations, and capstone rubrics will provide additional evidence of students' ability to apply knowledge and demonstrate professional skills.
- **Individual pathway progress:** The health science career coach will collaborate with teachers, counselors, other career coaches, and either the Principal or the DHS will review students' progress toward documented pathway goals, including prerequisites, college coursework, certifications, and work-based learning milestones. Students will receive individual guidance and timely referrals for academic or other supports, and plans will be adjusted as interests and needs change.
- **Annual program evaluation:** BHSA leadership will compile an annual student achievement report comparing results with established program goals and, as data become available, prior-year outcomes. Results will be examined by course, pathway, and student group where appropriate and consistent with privacy requirements to identify gaps in

access, participation, and achievement. Annual student and parent surveys and feedback from instructors, postsecondary partners, and clinical or work-based learning supervisors will supplement achievement data.

The annual review will guide documented improvements to instruction, course offerings, student supports, and partnerships. Findings will be shared with district leadership and the BHSA advisory board to support accountability and continuous improvement.

5. **Describe any variances to existing standards that the public charter school requires to enhance educational opportunities.**

Variance Request: Billings High School Academy (BHSA)

Standards For Which a Variance is Requested:

- 10.55.709 LIBRARY MEDIA SERVICES, K.12
- 10.55.904 BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAM OFFERINGS: HIGH SCHOOL

Program Overview & Model
Billings High School Academy (BHSA) would be a hybrid model: students spend three periods daily at BHSA taking classes in the Allied Health pathway, and the remainder of their day at their comprehensive area high school. This ensures access to library media services, core education programs (Math, ELA, Science and Social Studies), electives and extracurriculars (athletics, clubs, world languages, and music). Library services would be accessed through the area high school that students are attending. This would allow them to receive the opportunity to take advantage of all the district's library services.

Operational & Logistical Alignment
The hybrid structure would be fully integrated into district scheduling, staffing, and transportation systems. Students maintain primary enrollment at BHSA and secondary enrollment at their area high school, preserving a standard six-period course schedule. This co-aligned schedule would allow BHSA to focus resources on coursework in the Allied Health pathway while leveraging existing comprehensive high school facilities and student support services.

Academic Standards & Accreditation Compliance
BHSA students would satisfy all Montana high school graduation requirements while earning credits at both BHSA and their area high school. Fully aligned with state program standards under ARM 10.55.1101–10.55.2101, BHSA would provide access to qualified instructors, adequate facilities, and comprehensive programming across both educational environments.

These variance requests reflect an innovative, community-centered pathway that expands student opportunities without reducing program quality or state accreditation standards.

6. **Describe the instructional design, including the type of learning environment, class size and structure, curriculum overview, and teaching methods.**

BHSA's instructional design and student advising will support individualized healthcare pathways connecting high school coursework, dual credit, industry-recognized certifications, and work-based learning. Program planning will consider applicable Montana STARS Act and Future Ready funding opportunities to support student access and program sustainability.

BHSA will use three connected learning environments: in-person instruction at BHSA site(s); supported online and in-person dual-credit coursework aligned with students' healthcare pathways; and community-based learning at healthcare, laboratory, and other approved partner sites. Eleventh- and twelfth-grade students may attend BHSA for up to three periods in a morning or afternoon session while completing other graduation requirements at their area high schools. Depending on their selected pathways, students may complete approved college coursework onsite or asynchronously online and participate in supervised work-based learning. Onsite online coursework will include licensed-teacher supervision and academic support.

Initial classes are anticipated to average approximately 15–18 students, with enrollment limits determined by facility capacity and course requirements. Clinical, laboratory, and simulation groups will be adjusted for safety, supervision, equipment availability, and partner capacity. Course structure may include single-period classes, extended instructional blocks, and flexible scheduling for approved clinical or workplace experiences.

The curriculum will build on foundational health science and academic courses through advanced coursework, college prerequisites, certification preparation, and applied learning. It will align with applicable Montana OPI and health science CTE standards, BPS graduation requirements, postsecondary course outcomes, and certification requirements, drawing on the National Consortium for Health Science Education framework where appropriate.

Teaching methods will include project- and problem-based learning, laboratory investigation, simulation, case studies, direct instruction, blended learning, collaborative activities, mentoring, and demonstrations of competency. Guest speakers and appropriately qualified healthcare professionals may contribute specialized instruction and career perspectives. Teachers will collaborate to connect academic content with healthcare applications, use formative assessments to monitor understanding, and provide targeted support and appropriate accommodations to help students meet each course's critical concepts and proficiency standards.

7. **Describe plans for identifying and successfully serving students with disabilities, students who are English Language Learners, students who are academically challenged, and gifted students, including compliance with applicable laws and regulations.**

Billings Health Science Academy (BHSA) will serve students in grades 11–12 pursuing healthcare and health science pathways, including students with disabilities, English Language Learners, students experiencing academic challenges, and gifted students. BHSA will collaborate with students, families, area high schools, and district specialists to identify learning needs through student records, assessments, classroom performance, and referrals, following established BPS identification and evaluation procedures.

Students with disabilities will receive the accommodations, specialized instruction, and related services specified in their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) or Section 504 Plans. BHSA will coordinate with BPS service providers to ensure continuity of required services and appropriate access to classroom, laboratory, and work-based learning experiences.

English Language Learners will receive language-development services and instructional supports coordinated through BPS, with interpretation or translation provided for meaningful family communication as needed. Students experiencing academic challenges will receive differentiated instruction, targeted interventions, academic support, and regular progress monitoring. Gifted students will have opportunities for advanced coursework, dual credit, independent research, mentorship, and enrichment aligned with their interests and readiness.

Teachers, the counselor, and the HSCC will collaborate with students, families, and appropriate specialists to monitor progress and adjust supports and pathway plans as needed. BHSA will comply with applicable federal and state laws and regulations, including IDEA, Section 504, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and requirements governing English learner services, as well as BPS policies and procedures.

8. **Describe student discipline policies, including those for special education students.**

BHSA will follow BPS Board policies, applicable student handbooks, due-process procedures, and state and federal law. Behavioral expectations will be communicated to students and families and will apply across BHSA site(s), area high schools, online learning environments, college campuses, school transportation, and community placements. BHSA will emphasize positive behavioral supports and corrective instruction, with disciplinary responses consistent with district policy and responsive to the seriousness and circumstances of the conduct. School staff will document incidents, communicate with families, and coordinate with district administrators and partner sites as appropriate.

Students with disabilities will receive all protections and services required under IDEA and Section 504. BHSA will implement students' IEPs, Section 504 Plans, behavior intervention plans, and required accommodations and supports. Disciplinary decisions will follow applicable procedural safeguards, including parent notification, manifestation determinations, review of disciplinary changes in placement, and continuation of educational services when required. BHSA will coordinate with district special education and Section 504 personnel to ensure appropriate procedures and supports.

Students participating in healthcare and other community placements will receive instruction in partner expectations for professionalism, patient privacy, safety, infection control, respectful communication, attendance, and confidentiality. Serious or repeated violations may result in removal from a particular placement, with immediate action when necessary to protect safety or patient privacy. BHSA will review the circumstances with the partner and appropriate district personnel, apply district procedures and applicable disability safeguards, and determine appropriate supports and alternative learning opportunities. Removal from a partner site will not automatically result in dismissal from BHSA.

9. **Describe how the public charter school will demonstrate a commitment to and robust understanding of personalized and proficiency-based learning.**

Personalized and proficiency-based learning will guide BHSA's instruction and student advising. Each student will develop and regularly update an individualized academic and career pathway identifying graduation requirements, healthcare interests,

college coursework, certification opportunities, work-based learning goals, and needed supports. Teachers, the counselor, and the HSCC will help students monitor progress and adjust their plans as interests and goals evolve.

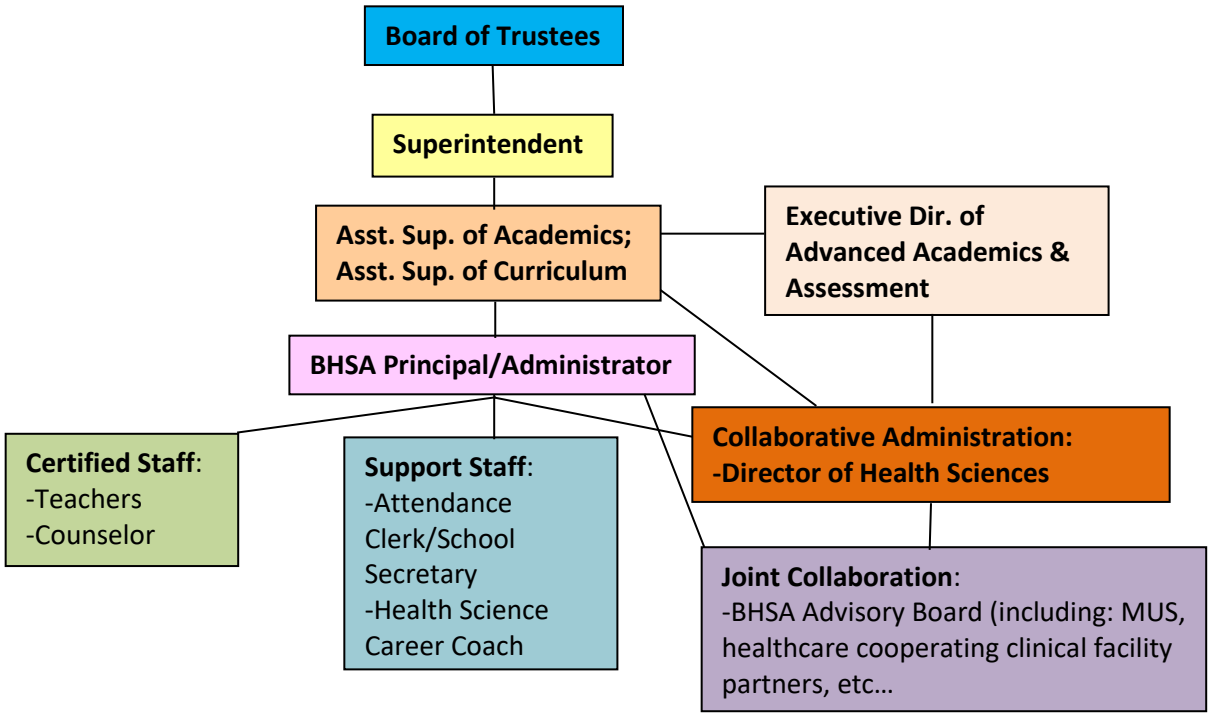
Each course will identify critical concepts, learning targets, and proficiency standards. Students will demonstrate learning through assessments appropriate to the course, including examinations, laboratory and simulation performance, skill demonstrations, projects, and workplace evaluations. Ongoing feedback will guide additional instruction, practice, reassessment, and enrichment where permitted by course requirements.

BHSA will follow approved BPS grading and credit policies. Dual-credit courses will follow the partner institution's grading, assessment, and course requirements, while certification and clinical experiences will retain applicable competency, safety, and required-hour standards. Within these expectations, BHSA will provide individualized support and meaningful learning choices to help students succeed.

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

See Submission Procedures

10. **Describe the public charter school's organizational chart that clearly presents the proposed organizational structure, including lines of authority and reporting between the governing board, staff, related bodies such as advisory bodies or parent and teacher councils, and external organizations that will play a role in managing the public charter school.**



BHSA's organizational structure will follow this line of authority: BPS Board of Trustees → Superintendent → designated Assistant Superintendent or executive administrator → Director of Health Sciences & BHSA Principal or designated district school leader.

The Board will establish policy, approve the charter application and district commitments, oversee budget, contracts, and personnel actions, and monitor school performance. The Superintendent will delegate district-level oversight to the designated executive administrator. The BHSA Principal or designated school leader will manage daily operations and supervise assigned instructional and classified staff.

The Director of Health Sciences, or another appointed district administrator, will report through the established BPS administrative structure and collaborate with school leadership to coordinate curriculum, certification opportunities, work-based learning, postsecondary alignment, and healthcare partnerships.

The full-time HSCC will serve a central role in guiding all BPS students pursuing a health science pathway, including students attending BHSA and those enrolled in health science courses at other district schools. Working closely with the Director of Health Sciences, school counselors, teachers, and partners, the career coach will help students develop and update individualized pathway plans, select appropriate coursework, navigate dual-credit and certification opportunities, access work-

based learning, and prepare for postsecondary education or employment. The career coach will monitor student progress, help address barriers, and coordinate transitions among district programs and partner opportunities. The position's supervisory assignment will be established by BPS to reflect its districtwide responsibilities.

Teachers, the counselor, and other staff assigned to BHSA will report to the designated school leader unless otherwise specified by BPS. Shared special education, multilingual learner, clerical, and other district personnel will retain their established supervisory relationships while coordinating services with BHSA leadership.

A Health Science Advisory Board representing healthcare employers, postsecondary institutions, workforce agencies, educators, students, and families will advise BHSA leadership and the Director of Health Sciences on curriculum, workforce needs, certification opportunities, clinical experiences, safety, and continuous improvement. It will serve in an advisory capacity without governing or supervisory authority.

External organizations will support instruction, clinical placements, work-based learning, and other agreed-upon services through memoranda of understanding or service agreements. They will not manage or govern BHSA or supervise BPS employees. Progress reports will be provided regularly to district leadership and at least annually to the BPS Board of Trustees.

11. **Describe the roles and responsibilities of the governing board, the proposed leadership management team, and other entities shown in the organizational chart.**

The BPS Board of Trustees will provide governance through policy, fiscal oversight, personnel and contract approvals, and accountability. The Superintendent will provide strategic direction, while the supervising Assistant Superintendent will monitor performance, coordinate district resources, and support BHSA leadership.

The BHSA Principal and Director of Health Sciences will work collaboratively, with complementary responsibilities. The principal will lead daily school operations, scheduling, safety, student services, staff supervision, and implementation of the academic program. The Director will lead health science pathway development, healthcare and postsecondary partnerships, dual-credit and certification alignment, work-based learning systems, and advisory-board engagement. Together, they will coordinate program planning, staffing recommendations, resource needs, and continuous improvement within their assigned district authority.

Initial instructional staffing is planned at 3.0 FTE, potentially distributed through job-sharing arrangements, with coordination among BHSA and Career Center teachers. Teachers will deliver instruction, assess student proficiency, provide academic support, and collaborate across instructional sites.

The counselor will coordinate graduation planning, social-emotional support, and access to appropriate district services, working with special education and multilingual learner personnel. The full-time HSCC will guide all BPS students pursuing health science pathways, including those outside BHSA. In close collaboration with the Director of Health Sciences, the coach will support individualized pathway planning, course selection, dual-credit and certification opportunities, work-based learning, progress monitoring, and transitions to college or employment.

An Attendance Clerk/School Secretary will support attendance records, communication, and daily administrative needs. Shared district personnel will provide specialized services within their assigned responsibilities. The Health Science Advisory Board will offer recommendations on program relevance and improvement. Postsecondary and healthcare partners will provide agreed-upon instruction, mentoring, simulations, clinical experiences, and work-based learning, with responsibilities defined through applicable agreements.

12. **Provide a staffing chart for the public charter school's first year and a staffing plan for the term of the public charter school.**

BHSA's first-year staffing plan combines dedicated instructional positions, shared leadership and support positions, and existing BPS services. Staffing may include full-time, part-time, or job-sharing assignments within the approved FTE allocation.

Position	Planned Year-One Allocation	Primary Responsibility
Health Science Teachers	3.0 FTE total	Instruction, proficiency assessment, academic support, and required supervision of laboratory, online, or clinical learning
Principal/Administrator	Approximately 0.5 FTE	Daily operations, staff supervision, scheduling, safety, and student services

Counselor	Approximately 0.5 FTE	Graduation planning, counseling, and coordination of student supports
Health Science Career Coach (HSCC)	1.0 FTE	Pathway advising and coordination for all BPS health science students, including those outside BHSA, in close collaboration with the Director of Health Sciences
Attendance Clerk/School Secretary/Registrar	Approximately 0.5 FTE	Attendance records, manages student enrollment/records/transcripts, communication, administrative support
Custodial/Maintenance Support	Approximately 0.25 FTE	Facility support, depending on location and shared-service arrangements
Director of Health Sciences	Existing district position; shared support	Program development, healthcare and postsecondary partnerships, and collaboration with BHSA leadership and the career coach; also works in Office of Community Education by overseeing health science courses
Specialized District Services	Based on student and program needs	Special education, multilingual learner services, nursing, technology, transportation, nutrition, security, and related supports

The 3.0 FTE teaching allocation may be distributed among three full-time teachers or multiple appropriately licensed educators through part-time or job-sharing arrangements. Qualified healthcare professionals may fill teaching positions with appropriate licensure, including Class 4B where applicable. Teaching assignments will generally provide no more than five instructional periods and one preparation period daily, with a goal of limiting each teacher to two course preparations and no more than three where feasible. Additional instructional support from healthcare professionals or postsecondary faculty may be arranged according to program requirements and approved employment or partnership arrangements.

For Years 1–3, the preliminary plan retains 3.0 FTE teaching positions, with shared leadership and support services. Throughout the five-year charter term, BPS will review staffing annually in relation to enrollment, course demand, student-support needs, clinical supervision requirements, facilities, partner capacity, and available funding. Additional teaching or support positions may be proposed as these factors justify expansion; increases are not assumed or guaranteed.

The full-time HSCC will remain a central component of the staffing plan, supporting students across district health science pathways and coordinating closely with the Director of Health Sciences, counselors, teachers, and partners. Final staffing allocations and assignments will be determined through BPS budgeting, personnel procedures, and applicable collective-bargaining agreements.

13. **Detail the public charter school startup plan, identifying tasks, timelines, and responsible individuals.**

The Director of Health Sciences (DHS) serves as the primary project lead and is currently responsible for developing and coordinating BHSA's startup plan toward a planned August 2027 opening. This work includes program design, application preparation, partnership development, and implementation planning. Required district decisions and approvals will remain with authorized BPS administrators and departments.

The table below summarizes major startup tasks, timelines, and responsible parties. The DHS maintains a detailed working Plan of Action to track individual tasks, dependencies, deadlines, and progress. Future assignments identify anticipated responsibilities rather than staffing or support already secured. Timelines may be adjusted based on charter approval, funding, facilities, staffing, and partner readiness.

Current career coaches and high school counselors will guide students at their respective schools through health science pathway exploration, course selection, and registration, collaborating with the Director of Health Sciences (DHS) on student outreach, individualized pathway advising, dual-credit and certification coordination, clinical and work-based learning preparation, student communications, and progress monitoring. This support will extend to all BPS students pursuing health science pathways, including those not enrolled in BHSA.

Until additional personnel are assigned, the DHS will continue coordinating startup work alongside existing Community Education and Career Center health science responsibilities. BPS leadership will need to establish staffing support, priorities, and timelines consistent with available capacity. As the BHSA Principal/Administrator and staff become available, daily school operations will progressively transition to school leadership, with the DHS and Principal collaborating within responsibilities established by BPS.

Timeline	Key Startup Tasks	Responsible Individuals/Departments
Feb.–Summer 2026	Establish the vision and implementation framework; assess workforce needs; develop partnerships; identify potential courses, certifications, dual credit, clinical and work-based learning opportunities; evaluate locations.	Director of Health Sciences (DHS)
Aug.–Oct. 2026	Complete and revise the charter application, enrollment projections, curriculum, staffing, facilities, governance, budget, and implementation plans; present to the BPS Board; obtain support letters; submit during the Oct. 26–30 application window.	DHS; BPS administration for required review, approvals, and submission
Sept.–Dec. 2026	Continue facility planning; develop curriculum maps and pathways; clarify partner commitments; prepare draft handbook, application and registration processes, student-support procedures, admissions/lottery procedures, financial plans, and accountability measures.	DHS; authorized district personnel for required decisions and approvals
Upon charter approval	Prepare job descriptions for approval; coordinate approved postings and recruitment with HR; address approval conditions; seek confirmation of implementation priorities and funding.	DHS; BPS administration and HR for required approvals and personnel actions
Jan.–March 2027	Refine course offerings, staffing, budget, schedule framework, and location; brief principals, counselors, and career coaches; conduct student/family information sessions; open applications and registration as approval and district timelines permit.	DHS; authorized district personnel for required approvals
Feb.–Apr. 2027	Review applications and course demand; conduct a lottery if required; establish enrollment and course sections; develop the master schedule; coordinate recruitment and interviews; submit hiring recommendations through BPS procedures; begin individualized pathway advising.	DHS; School Counselors and Career Coaches; BHSA Principal/Administrator as hired or assigned; BPS administration and HR for personnel actions
Mar.–Jun. 2027	Coordinate completion and approval of facility and partner agreements, transportation, technology, student-information systems, safety procedures, student supports, clinical/work-based learning onboarding, procurement, and operating procedures.	DHS; BHSA Principal/Administrator as hired or assigned; appropriate BPS departments and partners
Apr.–Jul. 2027	Coordinate approved purchases of curriculum, equipment, technology, and supplies; prepare instructional spaces; finalize schedules and rosters; arrange staff training; communicate logistics and expectations to families.	DHS; BHSA Principal/Administrator, support staff, and teachers as hired or assigned; appropriate district departments
Jul.–Aug. 2027	Complete an opening-readiness review of staffing, facilities, equipment, technology, transportation, safety, schedules, agreements, and contingency plans; conduct staff onboarding and student/family orientation.	BHSA Principal/Administrator as hired or assigned, in collaboration with DHS; assigned staff and district departments
August 2027	Open according to the BPS 2027–28 calendar; monitor enrollment, attendance, transportation, staffing, facilities, technology, and student supports; address implementation needs.	BHSA Principal/Administrator and staff, with assigned district support; HSCC
Fall 2027 and ongoing	Review implementation, finances, student progress, certifications, dual credit, work-based learning, partnerships, and charter goals; adjust supports and identify future program-development priorities.	BHSA Principal/Administrator and DHS, as assigned by BPS leadership; staff and community partners; HSCC

14. **Describe the plans for recruiting and developing school leadership and staff.**

The Director of Health Sciences (DHS) is actively identifying potential BHSA instructors among current educators and practicing or retired healthcare professionals. Recruitment for the Principal/Administrator, teachers, counselor, HSCC, and support staff will follow established BPS procedures through approved assignments, job postings, professional networks, and healthcare and postsecondary partnerships. Approved job descriptions will ideally be posted promptly after charter approval, with interviews for school leadership and instructional staff beginning in late winter or early spring.

Current area high school counselors and career coaches will assist students at their respective schools with health science pathway planning, course selection, and enrollment, including proposed BHSA offerings. The DHS will provide these staff with guidance and updated information on course availability, prerequisites, student eligibility, and registration procedures to support consistent, informed advising for all BPS students pursuing health science pathways.

Leadership candidates will be considered for their ability to manage school operations, support staff and diverse learners, and collaborate with the DHS and community partners. Instructional candidates will be evaluated for relevant content knowledge, industry experience, appropriate Montana teaching licensure or eligibility, and applicable course qualifications. Healthcare professionals may pursue Class 4B licensure where appropriate, and dual-credit instructors must meet the partner institution's requirements. Teaching assignments may use full-time, part-time, or job-sharing arrangements within the approved 3.0 FTE allocation, with attention to manageable workloads and course preparations. Additional staffing will depend on enrollment, program needs, funding, and district authorization.

Before opening and throughout each school year, leadership and staff will receive professional development appropriate to their assignments, including curriculum-specific training, personalized and proficiency-based instruction, student accommodations, dual-credit requirements, laboratory and clinical safety, and work-based learning supervision. District onboarding, mentoring, collaboration with educators and partners, and established BPS evaluation processes will support continued professional growth and program improvement.

15. **Describe the proposed leadership and teacher employment policies, including performance evaluation plans.**

BHSA leadership and staff will follow established BPS employment policies, Human Resources procedures, applicable collective bargaining agreements, Montana law, licensure requirements, and professional standards. Full-time, part-time, and job-sharing assignments will operate within approved staffing allocations, with clearly defined duties, supervisory relationships, and expectations for safety, confidentiality, ethical conduct, and student support. Dual-credit instructors will also meet applicable partner-institution requirements.

Administrators, teachers, HSCC, and support staff will be evaluated by their designated supervisors through established BPS processes appropriate to their positions. The BHSA Principal and Director of Health Sciences will collaborate on program implementation, while formal evaluation authority will follow district-assigned supervisory relationships.

Performance evaluations will reflect applicable professional standards, assigned duties, instructional or leadership effectiveness, student progress, and professional growth. Where relevant, BHSA-specific expectations will include personalized and proficiency-based learning, inclusive practices, student pathway support, dual-credit and certification preparation, safe clinical and work-based learning experiences, and contributions toward charter goals. Evaluation findings will guide feedback, professional development, and improvement plans as appropriate under BPS procedures.

16. **State the proposed governing bylaws.**

BHSA will operate under the existing governance policies and procedures of the Billings Public Schools Board of Trustees, consistent with applicable Montana law and the charter contract. These will serve as BHSA's governing framework, including provisions addressing Board organization, meetings, decision-making, policy adoption, and oversight.

The BPS Board of Trustees will retain governing authority, with the Superintendent and designated administrators providing operational and performance oversight. The Health Science Advisory Board and other stakeholder groups will serve in an advisory capacity without governing or supervisory authority. Any BHSA-specific governance procedures or amendments will be reviewed and adopted through established BPS processes.

BPS Board policies are available at: https://www.billingsschools.org/about-us/policies-procedures1

17. **Explain any partnerships or contractual relationships central to the operations and mission of the public charter school.**

BHSA's mission and operations will be supported by coordinated relationships with BPS high schools and Community Education, healthcare employers, postsecondary institutions, workforce agencies, and community organizations. These partnerships will connect students with healthcare career exploration, advanced coursework, dual credit, certification preparation, and applied learning.

Existing and developing healthcare relationships include Billings Urban Indian Health and Wellness Center, Billings Clinic, Intermountain Health, RiverStone Health, and St. John's United. Depending on capacity and agreed-upon commitments, these organizations may support instructional space, clinical experiences, job shadows, internships, mentoring, guest instruction, and

access to qualified healthcare professionals. Facility leases or use agreements will be central where BHSA operates in partner-owned spaces.

Postsecondary collaborators include City College/MSU Billings, the University of Montana, Highlands College, Rocky Mountain College, and Rocky Vista University. Existing and potential collaborations may support approved college coursework, dual credit, pathway alignment, research, simulations, mentoring, and exploration of future educational opportunities. PLTW will support biomedical curriculum and associated teacher training.

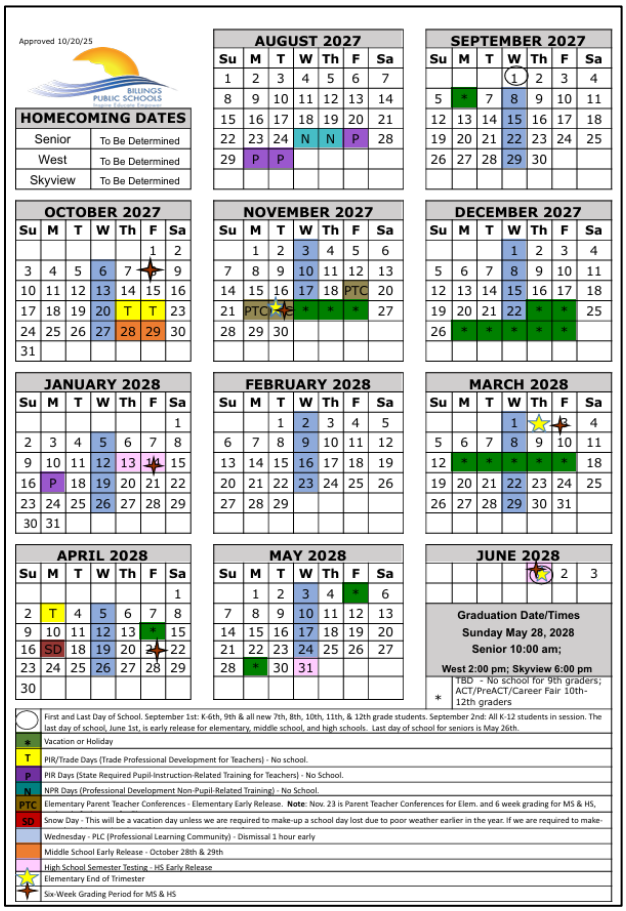
Workforce and community collaborators—including the Montana Department of Labor and Industry, AHEC, Reach Higher Montana, the Work-Based Learning Collaborative, Job Service, the Billings Chamber of Commerce, Phillips 66, and the Montana Healthcare Foundation—may contribute workforce guidance, career exploration, pre-apprenticeship or apprenticeship development, and financial or material support. Participation will depend on each organization's interests, resources, and confirmed commitments.

Relationships requiring formal commitments will be documented through leases, facility-use agreements, MOUs, affiliation agreements, service contracts, or other appropriate arrangements. Dual-credit opportunities will follow the applicable institution's procedures, with separate agreements used where required. As relevant, agreements will address responsibilities, costs, student eligibility, supervision, instructor qualifications, clinical onboarding, transportation, safety, insurance, confidentiality and patient privacy, evaluation, and termination.

Letters of support demonstrate interest but do not replace operational agreements or guarantee services. Final course offerings and experiential placements will reflect confirmed partner capacity. BPS will retain responsibility for school governance, student services, legal compliance, and academic accountability.

18. **Provide the proposed calendar and sample daily schedule.**

BHSA will follow the annual BPS Board-approved school calendar *(see below).* Students participating in college courses or work-based learning may follow additional partner schedules. These arrangements will be coordinated to preserve required instructional time, access to required courses, and progress toward graduation.



Proposed sample daily schedule:

	M, T, Th, F - Time	Wed - Time
Period 1	7:50am - 8:52am	7:50am - 8:42am
Period 2	8:55am - 9:57am	8:45am - 9:37 am
Period 3	10:00am - 11:02am	9:40am - 10:32am
Shuttle transportation; lunch @ area high schools	11:02am - 11:42am	10:32am - 11:12am
Period 4	11:45am - 12:47pm	11:15am - 12:07pm
Period 5	12:50pm - 1:52pm	12:10pm - 1:02pm
Period 6	1:55pm - 2:57pm	1:05pm - 1:57pm

Eleventh- and twelfth-grade students will generally attend BHSA during either Periods 1–3 or Periods 4–6. During the opposite half-day, students will attend their area high school or participate in approved core, elective, or dual-credit coursework through MSU Billings, City College, or the Washington Innovation Center (WIC), as applicable to their individual academic plans.

Some BHSA courses may use two consecutive periods to support laboratories, simulations, projects, clinical or partner experiences, and the availability of qualified healthcare instructors. Supported online college courses will include supervision by a licensed teacher. Full-day BHSA schedules may be considered where approved course offerings, staffing, space, and individual graduation requirements permit.

The schedule is preliminary and will be finalized in coordination with participating high schools, transportation staff, and postsecondary and healthcare partners. Shuttle and lunch arrangements will be reviewed to ensure adequate travel and meal time for both cohorts. Wednesday schedules will align with district scheduling and professional learning expectations.

BUSINESS OPERATIONS

See Submission Procedures

19. **Describe plans for providing transportation, food service, and all other significant operational or ancillary services.**

BHSA will coordinate transportation, food service, and other operational services through existing BPS departments and approved providers.

Food service: Students will continue to have access to breakfast and lunch at their area high schools. BPS Nutrition Services and its food service provider will coordinate meal access for students whose schedules require them to remain at BHSA, subject to final facility and service arrangements. Meal schedules will account for shuttle travel, and applicable meal eligibility and dietary accommodations will be maintained.

Transportation: Existing district transportation services will connect eligible students with their area high schools at the beginning and end of the school day. District-approved shuttles or other coordinated transportation will provide connections among participating high schools, the Career Center, WIC, and BHSA, as needed for approved student schedules. Routes and transition times will be finalized with BPS transportation staff.

Travel to college campuses, clinical placements, and work-based learning sites will be coordinated under district policies and partner requirements. Options may include district transportation, approved family arrangements, personal vehicles when permitted, public transit, or partner-supported transportation. Students' transportation needs will be considered when arranging placements so access is not dependent on owning a vehicle. Transportation specified in an IEP or Section 504 plan will be provided.

Other operational services: BPS departments and facility partners, as applicable, will coordinate custodial services, building maintenance, technology and internet access, instructional materials, accessibility, and school safety and emergency procedures. Students will retain access to district counseling, health services, special education, and other required supports. Responsibilities at shared or partner facilities will be defined in applicable agreements.

20. **Describe cocurricular and extracurricular programs and how the programs will be funded and delivered.**

As a hybrid program, BHSA students will retain access to cocurricular and extracurricular activities through their area high schools, including athletics, clubs, fine arts, and student organizations, subject to applicable eligibility requirements. Students

may also participate in the established HOSA–Future Health Professionals chapter at the Billings Career Center to build leadership skills and connect with peers pursuing healthcare careers. These activities will be delivered through existing school programs and funded through established district budgets and activity-funding procedures.

BHSA may also offer health science-related enrichment, service projects, leadership activities, and career-focused student organizations as staffing, student interest, and resources permit. These opportunities will be coordinated by designated staff and approved partners, with funding through approved program budgets, grants, donations, or other authorized sources. Scheduling and transportation will be coordinated where feasible to support participation.

21. **Describe the proposed financial plan and policies, including financial controls and audit requirements.**

BHSA's finances will be managed through Billings Public Schools' established budgeting, purchasing, accounting, reporting, and auditing systems. The BPS Board of Trustees will approve the annual budget in accordance with applicable law and district policy. The Chief Financial Officer and Business Office will oversee financial administration, internal controls, and compliance.

The financial plan will include startup costs, annual operating budgets, and five-year projections based on anticipated enrollment, approved staffing, facilities, curriculum, equipment, certification opportunities, transportation, and partnership costs. Funding assumptions will distinguish confirmed resources from potential grants, donations, and incentive funding. Ongoing commitments and program expansion will be based on approved budgets and available funding.

The BHSA Principal/Administrator and Director of Health Sciences will collaborate with the CFO to develop program budget requests and review actual revenues and expenditures against budget projections. Financial controls will include appropriate authorization and separation of duties, purchasing and contracting procedures, supporting documentation, inventory and asset management, account reconciliation, and regular financial reporting. Restricted funds will be tracked and used according to their designated purposes.

BHSA's financial activities will be included in BPS's independent financial audit process and will meet applicable state, federal, grant, and charter reporting and audit requirements. District leadership and the Board will review audit findings, with corrective actions implemented as needed. Budget or staffing adjustments will follow established district approval procedures.

22. **Describe the insurance coverage that will be obtained.**

BHSA will obtain insurance coverage through Billings Public Schools' district insurance program, including the Montana Schools Property and Liability Insurance Plan. Before opening, the BPS Business Office will confirm that applicable property, liability, workers' compensation, and vehicle coverage appropriately address BHSA's facilities, staff, equipment, transportation, and school-sponsored activities.

Coverage needs for leased or shared instructional spaces, clinical placements, internships, and other work-based learning experiences will be reviewed with the district's insurance provider and partners. Any additional coverage, endorsements, or certificates of insurance required by facility or partnership agreements will be arranged through established BPS procedures.

23. **Describe the startup and five-year budgets with clearly stated assumptions.**

BHSA's preliminary startup and five-year budgets assume an August 2027 opening and enrollment of 90, 90, 100, 108, and 108 half-time students in Years 1–5, respectively, equivalent to an estimated 45, 45, 50, 54, and 54 ANB for planning purposes. The accompanying spreadsheets provide the five-year summary, Year 1 detail, and matching line-item assumptions.

Staffing projections include 3.0 FTE teachers, potentially distributed through job-sharing; 0.5 FTE Principal/Administrator; 0.5 FTE counselor; 0.5 FTE clerical support; 0.25 FTE custodial support; and a full-time, 1.0 FTE Health Science Career Coach. Personnel estimates assume approximately 3% annual salary increases and a 30% benefits/payroll allowance, subject to CFO and HR confirmation. Staffing remains constant in the five-year model, with expansion dependent on funding and district authorization.

Year 1 includes a revised $120,000 allowance for curriculum, laboratory, and simulation equipment, prioritizing essential purchases and using existing resources or phased purchases where feasible. Other expenses include technology, certification and testing, dual-credit support, professional development, transportation, insurance/legal/compliance, communications, and contracted instruction or work-based learning support. Later-year budgets provide allowances for ongoing instruction, supplies, and equipment replacement.

Revenue projections use CFO-provided planning assumptions, including no per-ANB entitlement in Year 1 and projected per-ANB revenue beginning in Year 2. Funding rates are generally held constant rather than assuming future increases. Confirmed one-time funding totals $373,000: $200,000 from the multi-district fund and $173,000 from 2026 Innovative tax-credit donations specifically designated for “Healthcare Pathway Expansion.” Additional grants, donations, incentive funding, and in-kind contributions may support eligible expenses but are not assumed as guaranteed revenue.

Projected Year 1 income is $768,177.15, with expenses of $766,055.66, leaving a preliminary balance of $2,121.49 before unresolved facility costs. The location remains under review, with Lincoln Center currently the likely option and Billings Urban Indian Health and Wellness Center an alternative if the pending lease proposal is affordable. Facility costs are shown as $0 placeholders until any additional lease, utility, or district-site expenses are confirmed.

No separate contingency allowance is currently included. Projected balances in all five years remain preliminary until outstanding costs are incorporated. The CFO and Business Office will review funding eligibility and timing, startup cash flow, personnel costs, and facility arrangements. Final budgets, commitments, and adjustments will follow established BPS approval procedures. (*see next three pages for specifics)*

BHSA: 5-YEAR & BUDGET SUMMARY					
BUDGET ITEM	**YEAR 1 (2027-28)**	**YEAR 2 (2028-29)**	**YEAR 3 (2029-30)**	**YEAR 4 (2030-31)**	**YEAR 5 (2031-32)**
Half-time students	90	90	100	108	108
Estimated ANB / FTE students	45	45	50	54	54
INCOME / REVENUE					
Basic Entitlement	$375,333	$375,333	$375,333	$375,333	$375,333
Per-ANB Entitlement	-	$385,020	$427,738	$461,957	$461,957
Indian Education for All	$1,176	$1,176	$1,307	$1,411	$1,411
Data for Achievement	$1,126	$1,126	$1,251	$1,351	$1,351
American Indian Achievement Gap	$1,958	$1,958	$2,176	$2,350	$2,350
Quality Educator	$15,584	$15,584	$15,584	$15,584	$15,584
At-Risk — incremental	-	-	-	-	-
SPED — incremental	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL CORE INCOME	**$395,177**	**$780,197**	**$823,389**	**$857,986**	**$857,986**
One-time / supplemental funds	$373,000	-	-	-	-
TOTAL INCOME incl. supplemental	**$768,177**	**$780,197**	**$823,389**	**$857,986**	**$857,986**
EXPENSES — PERSONNEL					
3.0 Teachers	$216,300	$222,789	$229,473	$236,357	$243,448
0.5 Principal / Administrator	$68,109	$70,152	$72,257	$74,425	$76,657
0.5 School Counselor	$36,050	$37,132	$38,245	$39,393	$40,575
0.5 Secretary / Attendance Clerk	$16,157	$16,642	$17,141	$17,655	$18,185
1.0 Career Coach	$38,670	$39,830	$41,025	$42,256	$43,523
0.25 Custodian	$8,603	$8,861	$9,127	$9,401	$9,683
Salary/Wage Subtotal	**$383,889**	**$395,406**	**$407,268**	**$419,486**	**$432,070**
Benefits / payroll burden	$115,167	$118,622	$122,180	$125,846	$129,621
TOTAL PERSONNEL	**$499,056**	**$514,027**	**$529,448**	**$545,332**	**$561,692**
EXPENSES — OPERATING					
Curriculum, lab & simulation equipment	$120,000	$35,000	$35,000	$35,000	$35,000
Technology / devices / software — provisional	$35,000	$12,000	$12,000	$12,000	$12,000
Credentials, testing & dual-credit support	$20,000	$22,000	$24,000	$26,000	$28,000
Professional development	$12,000	$10,000	$10,000	$10,000	$10,000
Student transportation / shuttles — provisional	$50,000	$51,500	$53,045	$54,636	$56,275
Insurance / legal / compliance	$10,000	$10,300	$10,609	$10,927	$11,255
Communications / recruitment	$5,000	$5,000	$5,000	$5,000	$5,000
Contracted instruction / WBL	$15,000	$15,450	$15,914	$16,391	$16,883
Facility lease / utilities — TBD	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL OPERATING	**$267,000**	**$161,250**	**$165,568**	**$169,954**	**$174,413**
BOTTOM LINE					
TOTAL EXPENSES	**$766,056**	**$675,277**	**$695,016**	**$715,286**	**$736,105**
BALANCE / (GAP) — before TBD facility costs	**$2,121**	**$104,920**	**$128,372**	**$142,701**	**$121,882**

YEAR 1 DETAIL — 2027-28	AMOUNT	JUSTIFICATION
Enrollment — half-time students	90	Equivalent to 45 full-time students / estimated ANB.
Estimated ANB	45	CFO planning convention: two half-time students = one ANB.
INCOME / REVENUE		
Basic Entitlement	$375,333	CFO-provided planning amount; confirm final eligibility/formula with CFO/OPI.
Per-ANB Entitlement	-	CFO startup assumption for Year 1.
Indian Education for All	$1,176	FY27 planning rate applied to 45 ANB.
Data for Achievement	$1,126	FY27 planning rate applied to 45 ANB.
American Indian Achievement Gap	$1,958	Planning estimate using 8.5% enrollment share and FY27 rate.
Quality Educator	$15,584	Planning estimate for 4.0 qualifying licensed FTE.
TOTAL CORE INCOME	$395,177	
One-time / supplemental funds	$373,000	Confirmed: $200,000 multi-district funds + $173,000 for Healthcare Pathway Expansion.
TOTAL INCOME incl. supplemental	$768,177	
PERSONNEL		
3.0 Teachers	$216,300	Planning salary estimate.
0.5 Principal / Administrator	$68,109	Planning salary estimate.
0.5 School Counselor	$36,050	Planning salary estimate.
0.5 Secretary / Attendance Clerk	$16,157	Planning wage estimate.
1.0 Career Coach	$38,670	Planning wage estimate.
0.25 Custodian	$8,603	Planning wage estimate.
Benefits / payroll burden	$115,167	30% planning placeholder; replace with BPS actual loaded rates.
TOTAL PERSONNEL	$499,056	
OPERATING EXPENSES		
Curriculum, lab & simulation equipment	$120,000	Revised $120,000 startup allowance; prioritize essential curriculum, lab and simulation purchases. Phase purchases and use existing equipment where feasible; not vendor quotes.
Technology / devices / software	$35,000	Provisional placeholder; confirm what BPS already supplies after site selection.
Credentials, testing & dual-credit support	$20,000	Estimated certification exams, credential preparation and possible dual-credit costs.
Professional development	$12,000	Teacher PLTW training, healthcare-specific PD and instructor certification estimate.
Student transportation / shuttles	$50,000	Provisional placeholder pending location and BPS transportation plan.
Insurance / legal / compliance	$10,000	Allowance for affiliation agreements, clinical compliance and possible incremental legal/insurance costs.
Communications / recruitment	$5,000	Printing, outreach, recruitment events and promotional materials.
Contracted instruction / WBL	$15,000	Allowance for healthcare-professional instruction, clinical supervision and WBL support.
Facility lease / utilities	-	Location under review: likely Lincoln Center, or BUIHWC if lease is affordable. Awaiting lease quote; $0 is a placeholder, not a confirmed cost.
TOTAL OPERATING	$267,000	
TOTAL EXPENSES	$766,056	
PROJECTED BALANCE incl. supplemental	$2,121	Projected balance before unresolved facility costs; no separate contingency allowance.

BUDGET SUMMARY LINE ITEM	HOW IT WAS CALCULATED / PLANNING BASIS
Half-time students	User-provided enrollment targets: 90, 90, 100, 108, and 108 half-time students for Years 1–5.
Estimated ANB / FTE students	Calculated as half-time enrollment ÷ 2: 45, 45, 50, 54, and 54 estimated ANB/FTE students.
INCOME / REVENUE	**Section heading; no calculation.**
Basic Entitlement	$375,333 per year based on the CFO-provided planning amount previously used for BHSA; final eligibility and amount should be confirmed by the BPS CFO/OPI.
Per-ANB Entitlement	Year 1 = $0 under the CFO startup assumption. Years 2–5 use the CFO-based planning amounts: $385,020; $427,738; $461,957; $461,957.
Indian Education for All	Estimated ANB × $26.13 FY27 planning rate: 45, 45, 50, 54, 54 ANB respectively.
Data for Achievement	Estimated ANB × $25.02 FY27 planning rate.
American Indian Achievement Gap	Half-time enrollment × estimated 8.5% American Indian enrollment share × $256 per eligible student; planning estimate only.
Quality Educator	4.0 estimated qualifying licensed FTE × $3,896 = $15,584 annually; CFO/OPI should confirm which BHSA positions qualify.
At-Risk — incremental	Set to $0 because no BHSA-specific incremental allocation has been confirmed; add only if BPS/OPI confirms an attributable amount.
SPED — incremental	Set to $0 incremental because students are expected to remain BPS students and no separate BHSA incremental SPED revenue has been confirmed.
TOTAL CORE INCOME	**Sum of Basic Entitlement + Per-ANB Entitlement + Indian Education for All + Data for Achievement + American Indian Achievement Gap + Quality Educator + At-Risk + SPED.**
One-time / supplemental funds	Confirmed Year 1 funding = $373,000: $200,000 multi-district funds plus $173,000 for 2026 Innovative tax-credit donations specifically designated for "Healthcare Pathway Expansion". No additional supplemental revenue assumed
TOTAL INCOME incl. supplemental	**TOTAL CORE INCOME + One-time / supplemental funds.**
EXPENSES — PERSONNEL	**Section heading; no calculation.**
3.0 Teachers	Year 1 planning cost = $216,300 total, or approximately $72,100 per teacher. Later years increase approximately 3% annually.
0.5 Principal / Administrator	Year 1 planning cost = $68,109 for 0.5 FTE. Later years increase approximately 3% annually.
0.5 School Counselor	Year 1 planning cost = $36,050 for 0.5 FTE. Later years increase approximately 3% annually.
0.5 Secretary / Attendance Clerk	Year 1 planning cost = $16,157 for 0.5 FTE. Later years increase approximately 3% annually.
1.0 Career Coach	Year 1 planning cost = $38,670 for 1.0 FTE. Later years increase approximately 3% annually.
0.25 Custodian	Year 1 planning cost = $8,603 for 0.25 FTE using the prior BPS custodial wage planning assumption. Later years increase approximately 3% annually.
Salary/Wage Subtotal	**Sum of the six personnel salary/wage line items above.**
Benefits / payroll burden	Planning estimate equal to approximately 30% of Salary/Wage Subtotal; CFO/HR should replace with actual BPS benefit/load rates by employee group.
TOTAL PERSONNEL	**Salary/Wage Subtotal + Benefits / payroll burden.**
EXPENSES — OPERATING	**Section heading; no calculation.**
Curriculum, lab & simulation equipment	Year 1 = $120,000 revised startup allowance, prioritizing essential curriculum, laboratory and simulation purchases; use existing resources and phase purchases where feasible. Years 2–5 = $35,000 annually.
Technology / devices / software — provisional	Year 1 = $35,000 startup placeholder; Years 2–5 = $12,000 annually. Provisional until the site is known and BPS determines what technology is already available.
Credentials, testing & dual-credit support	Planning allowance of $20,000, $22,000, $24,000, $26,000 and $28,000 for Years 1–5 to support student exams, credentials and possible dual-credit costs as enrollment/program offerings grow.
Professional development	Year 1 = $12,000 for startup training such as PLTW, healthcare-specific PD and instructor certification; Years 2–5 = $10,000 annually for continuing training.
Student transportation / shuttles — provisional	Year 1 = $50,000 planning placeholder; later years increase approximately 3% annually. Provisional until BHSA location and the BPS transportation plan are determined.
Insurance / legal / compliance	Year 1 = $10,000 planning allowance for affiliation agreements, clinical compliance and possible incremental insurance/legal needs; later years increase approximately 3% annually.
Communications / recruitment	$5,000 annually for printing, outreach, recruitment events and promotional materials; some costs may ultimately be absorbed by existing BPS resources.
Contracted instruction / WBL	Year 1 = $15,000 allowance for specialized healthcare-professional instruction, clinical supervision and work-based-learning support; later years increase approximately 3% annually.
Facility lease / utilities — TBD	**Location under review: likely Lincoln Center, or BUIHWC if lease is affordable; awaiting quote. $0 placeholder in all years excludes unresolved lease/utilities or incremental district-site costs. Update when**
TOTAL OPERATING	Sum of all operating expense line items: curriculum/lab/simulation, technology, credentials/dual credit, professional development, transportation, insurance/legal/compliance, communications/recruitment, contracted instruction/WBL,
BOTTOM LINE	**Section heading; no calculation.**
TOTAL EXPENSES	**TOTAL PERSONNEL + TOTAL OPERATING.**
SURPLUS / (GAP) incl. supplemental	**Total income less total expenses. Year 1 balance = $2,121.49 before unresolved facility costs. No separate contingency (unexpected-expense reserve) included. Later-year balances remain preliminary.**

24. **Describe the startup and first-year cash flow projections with clearly stated assumptions.**

BHSA's startup and first-year cash flow planning assumes an August 2027 opening and enrollment of 90 half-time students, equivalent to approximately 45 ANB. Projected Year 1 core revenue is $395,177.15, supplemented by $373,000 in confirmed one-time funding, for total projected revenue of $768,177.15. The model assumes no per-ANB entitlement in Year 1.

First-year expenses total $766,055.66, including $499,055.66 for personnel and benefits and $267,000 for operating and startup costs. These expenses include a revised $120,000 allowance for curriculum, laboratory, and simulation equipment. The resulting projected balance is $2,121.49 before unresolved facility costs.

Startup purchases and staff training are expected to occur primarily before opening and during initial implementation, while payroll and other operating expenses will occur throughout the school year. Purchases will be prioritized and phased where feasible to align expenditures with available funds. The BPS Business Office will confirm when the $373,000 in supplemental funding and projected core revenue will be available and establish a cash flow schedule for startup purchases, payroll, and ongoing expenses. Any temporary cash shortfall caused by revenue timing will be addressed through district-approved arrangements before commitments are made.

The location remains under review, with Lincoln Center currently the likely option and Billings Urban Indian Health and Wellness Center an alternative if the pending lease proposal is affordable. Facility costs remain $0 placeholders until additional expenses are determined. Technology and transportation allowances are also provisional, and no separate contingency allowance is included.

Final cash flow projections will incorporate confirmed facility costs, expenditure schedules, and funding availability, with regular monitoring by the CFO and Business Office.

25. **Describe anticipated fundraising contributions and evidence, if applicable.**

BHSA has $373,000 in confirmed startup and supplemental funding, consisting of $200,000 from the multi-district fund and $173,000 from 2026 Innovative tax-credit donations. These resources are included in the accompanying budget. Additional fundraising contributions are not assumed as guaranteed revenue in the current financial model.

The BPS grant writer and Billings Education Foundation will continue exploring grants, charitable donations, sponsorships, and other support for equipment, student certification costs, professional development, and program sustainability. Future Ready incentives, Montana Advanced Opportunity funding, and state or Perkins CTE resources may support eligible activities, subject to applicable requirements, allowable uses, and funding availability.

Potential in-kind support includes donated medical equipment, instructional space, mentoring, and specialized learning experiences. Donated equipment will be evaluated for safety, condition, and instructional suitability. Both Billings Clinic and Intermountain Health have offered classroom space, with final use arrangements to be established.

Evidence of support will include available funding confirmations, partner letters, and finalized agreements, as applicable. Letters of support demonstrate partner interest; specific financial and in-kind contributions will be documented as commitments are confirmed.

26. **Describe the facilities plan, including backup or contingency plans.**

BHSA's facilities plan remains under review, with Lincoln Center currently the likely location for initial operations. BPS is considering relocating Community Education programming to make instructional spaces available for BHSA and maintain separation between adult programming and high school students. Any relocation and final room assignments will be determined through district planning. Existing classrooms and health science instructional spaces could support classroom instruction, supervised online coursework, and laboratory or simulation activities.

BPS is also exploring a lease for three classrooms at Billings Urban Indian Health and Wellness Center (BUIHWC), each accommodating approximately 18 students. The facility is anticipated to be completed in March 2027. BUIHWC remains an alternative if lease terms are affordable and the building is ready for school use. Its healthcare services could support career exploration, job shadows, mentoring, and guest instruction, subject to partner approval, student eligibility, and supervision requirements.

Supplemental instructional options include classroom space offered in the Billings Clinic Annex Building and Intermountain Health has offered at least one classroom space; existing laboratories at the Career Center; WIC; and approved postsecondary or community partner facilities. Potential space at Senior High School and St. John's United Gainan's Commons may also be explored, with availability and suitability to be confirmed.

If BUIHWC lease terms or construction readiness do not support the planned opening, BPS will prioritize available Lincoln Center space and other approved district locations. If Lincoln Center space cannot be made available as anticipated, district leadership will evaluate alternative district and partner locations and adjust scheduling or the initial course mix. Courses requiring specialized facilities will be offered only when suitable space, equipment, and supervision are available.

Before opening, BPS will confirm instructional-site readiness, including applicable accessibility and occupancy requirements, technology, security, laboratory safety, student supervision, transportation, meal access, parking, and emergency procedures. Leases, facility-use agreements, and partner arrangements will define responsibilities and costs as appropriate. The opening-readiness review will identify alternate instructional arrangements for facility delays or disruptions to support continuity of instruction.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND NEED

See Submission Procedures

27. **Describe the specific evidence of significant community support.**

Evidence of community support for BHSA includes established health science partnerships, ongoing planning meetings, offers of instructional space, and confirmed startup funding. Billings Clinic has supported existing BPS health science activities, including BLS training and CNA clinical experiences, and has offered classroom space in its Annex Building. Intermountain Health is considering available classroom space within its facilities. BPS is also discussing potential classroom leasing and healthcare learning opportunities with Billings Urban Indian Health and Wellness Center.

Healthcare employers, postsecondary institutions, and workforce organizations—including RiverStone Health, St. John's United, City College/MSU Billings, the University of Montana, Rocky Mountain College, Rocky Vista University, the Montana Department of Labor and Industry, AHEC, and the Work-Based Learning Collaborative—have engaged in existing health science activities or discussions supporting BHSA's development. Planning discussions have addressed dual credit, research mentorship, career exploration, guest instruction, clinical experiences, and work-based learning.

Continued community interest is also demonstrated through the Director of Health Sciences' ongoing meetings with professionals interested in helping develop pharmacy-related instruction, potentially including Pharmacy Technician training, and a dental career exploration course. These discussions will explore incorporating industry-recognized certification opportunities, such as Pharmacy Technician certification and dental radiography certification, subject to instructor qualifications, student eligibility, applicable certification requirements, and available resources.

Confirmed startup and supplemental funding totaling $373,000 provides additional evidence of financial support for implementation. Please see the accompanying letters of support, on pages 26-29, for additional evidence of community commitment to BHSA. Additional letters of support are still in the process of being coordinated with healthcare and business partners throughout Billings. Meeting records, classroom offers, and written partner communications further document this support.

Operational agreements and specific student opportunities will be documented as arrangements are finalized. Together, these actions demonstrate sustained community interest in expanding accessible healthcare education and developing a local workforce.

28. **Describe the opportunities and expectations for parent involvement.**

Parents and guardians will be invited to partner in students' academic and healthcare pathway planning, support, and school improvement. Before enrollment, families will receive clear information about available courses, instructional locations, half-day scheduling, transportation, any student costs, college-course expectations and privacy practices, certification and clinical eligibility requirements, safety, and work-based learning commitments.

Families will be encouraged to participate in orientation, periodic pathway-plan reviews, open houses, student presentations, and college and career planning events. They will be asked to review program expectations, provide required permissions and documentation, and communicate concerns that may affect student participation or progress. Teachers, counselors, and career coaches will support these conversations and help students and families understand available options.

Parents and guardians may contribute through advisory or parent groups, appropriate school events, career expertise, and surveys. Communication will be available in multiple formats, with translation or interpretation as needed and flexible participation options. Family input will inform student supports, school climate, and continuous improvement. Participation in advisory groups, volunteering, or school events will be encouraged but will not be a condition of admission or continued enrollment.

NOT AN EXISTING LOCAL SCHOOL BOARD? COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION

See Submission Procedures

1. **Provide specific evidence that the applicant has sought from the local school board the creation of a school or program of the located school district serving the mission and vision of the proposed public charter school.**

Not applicable. BHSA is proposed as a new public charter school operating under the existing BPS Board of Trustees. Evidence of local Board consideration and approval will be included with the application.

2. **Provide specific evidence that the local school board declined to create the school or program and declined to submit a proposal for the creation of a public charter school to the Board of Public Education.**

Not applicable. The applicant is the existing local school board and is not seeking to establish a separate public charter school district.

3. **Provide a legal description of the property of the existing school district from which the boundaries of the public charter school district are proposed to be formed.**

Not applicable. BHSA will operate within the existing Billings Public Schools district and does not propose forming a separate school district or changing district boundaries.

4. **Share background information on the initial governing board members and, if identified, the proposed school leadership and management team.**

Not applicable to a separate governing board. The elected BPS Board of Trustees will govern BHSA. The Superintendent and designated district administrators will provide oversight, and the final school leadership team will be identified through established BPS hiring and assignment processes.

Questions? Contact bpe@mt.gov

October 9, 2026

Montana Board of Public Education

Subject: Letter of Support for Billings Health Science Academy

Dear Members of the Board:

On behalf of the Montana Work-Based Learning Collaborative (WBLC), I am pleased to express my support for Billings Public Schools' proposal to establish Billings Health Science Academy (BHSA), with a planned opening in August 2027. The proposed academy will initially serve students in grades 11–12, helping them connect their education with healthcare career opportunities through advanced coursework, college credit, industry-recognized credentials, and work-based learning.

As Director of the Montana Work-based Learning Collaborative (WBLC), an initiative with over 35 public and private organizations strengthening and expanding work-based learning across Montana, I value opportunities that help young people explore careers, build professional skills, and make informed decisions about their futures. BHSA's proposed approach aligns with our work to expand high-quality, accessible, relevant, and measurable work-based learning experiences through collaboration among educators, employers, and community partners.

BHSA will build on existing Billings Public Schools health science coursework and provide students with opportunities to develop individualized college and career pathways. Planned partnerships with healthcare providers and postsecondary institutions would connect classroom learning with experiences such as job shadowing, mentorship, clinical learning, and internships, as appropriate to student readiness and program requirements. These experiences can help students understand the range of healthcare careers available to them and develop confidence, a sense of belonging, and purpose in their learning.

The academy's emphasis on healthcare partnerships can also help employers connect with students who may become future employees. By preparing young people for continued education and appropriate entry-level employment, BHSA has the potential to strengthen Montana's healthcare workforce while expanding opportunities for students to live, work, and serve in their communities.

I support the proposed Billings Health Science Academy and encourage the Montana Board of Public Education to approve Billings Public Schools' application. Thank you for considering this opportunity to expand meaningful college and career pathways for Montana students.

Sincerely,

Gabrielle Eklund Rowley
Director, Montana Work-Based Learning Collaborative
Reach Higher Montana
growley@reachhighermontana.org | 406-422-6809
www.wblmt.org

Intermountain Health

St. Vincent Regional Hospital

10/1/26

Montana Board of Public Education
Re: Support for the Billings Health Science Academy

Dear Members of the Montana Board of Public Education:

On behalf of Intermountain Health, I am pleased to express our support for Billings Public Schools' proposal to establish the Billings Health Science Academy (BHSA), with a planned opening in August 2027.

BHSA's vision of connecting high school students with health science coursework, career exploration, hands-on learning, and opportunities to earn credentials aligns with the needs of our healthcare community. We welcome the opportunity to explore a partnership that helps students discover meaningful careers while developing a future healthcare workforce for our region.

Intermountain Health and Billings Public Schools are discussing the potential use of classroom space on our campus for BHSA courses. We also look forward to exploring ways our staff might contribute their expertise through guest presentations, career exploration, curriculum collaboration, or teaching, as well as possible opportunities for students to learn from our facilities and simulation resources. The specific activities, space, and terms of any partnership remain subject to further planning and agreement between our organizations.

We appreciate Billings Public Schools' commitment to building health science pathways that respond to both student interests and community needs. We support the vision for BHSA and look forward to continuing our conversations as the academy takes shape.

Sincerely,

Dustin Strandell
Chief Operating Officer
Intermountain Health

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY BILLINGS

Support for Billings Health Science Academy

October 13, 2026

Montana Board of Public Education

Dear Members of the Board:

Montana State University Billings (MSUB) and City College at MSUB supports Billings Public Schools' proposal to establish Billings Health Science Academy (BHSA), with a planned opening in August 2027. We support the proposed partnership to expand college and career opportunities for students in grades 11–12 by connecting high school health science learning with postsecondary education, industry credentials, and healthcare career exploration.

A central focus of our collaboration is identifying opportunities for eligible BHSA students to enroll in dual-credit prerequisite courses. Our planning will explore pathways into Health and Human Performance, Human Services, Paramedic, and the Associate of Science in Nursing (ASN), including pre-ASN coursework, as well as potential Radiologic Technology options. Paramedic pathway discussions will include preparation for City College's online program option.

Upcoming meetings with Christine Simonsen, Director of Health Sciences for Billings Public Schools, and relevant MSUB and City College faculty and staff will outline available options and develop practical course pathways. These discussions will address course availability and delivery, prerequisites, student eligibility, degree applicability, scheduling, advising, and coordination with BHSA's high school graduation requirements. Specific offerings will be finalized through the appropriate academic review and partnership processes.

We support BHSA's proposed course and certification ideas. These proposed opportunities can help students build foundational skills, explore healthcare careers, and prepare for further education or appropriate entry-level employment. Individual offerings and credentials will be implemented as staffing, approvals, and partner arrangements are established.

By building on existing Billings Public Schools health science coursework and aligning student plans with college pathways, BHSA can help students make informed choices, earn applicable college credit while in high school, and enter postsecondary education better prepared. We value the academy's emphasis on individualized advising and healthcare partnerships that connect academic learning with professional expectations.

We support approval of the BHSA proposal and look forward to continued planning with Billings Public Schools to create accessible, coordinated pathways for students and strengthen Montana's future healthcare workforce.

Sincerely,

Lee Vartanian

Lee Vartanian, Ph.D.
Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
Montana State University Billings

Office of the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
1500 University Drive | Billings, Montana 59101-0245 | 406-657-2367

BILLINGS URBAN INDIAN

HEALTH & WELLNESS CENTER

September 17, 2026

Montana Board of Public Education
P.O. Box 200601
Helena, MT 59620-0601

Dear Members of the Montana Board of Public Education:

On behalf of Native American Development Corporation and Billings Urban Indian Health and Wellness Center, I am pleased to express our support for Billings Public Schools' proposal to establish the Billings Health Science Academy (BHSA), with a planned opening in fall 2027.

BHSA would provide students in grades 11 and 12 with personalized pathways into health-related careers through rigorous academics, dual-credit coursework, industry-recognized credentials, clinical experiences, internships, pre-apprenticeships, simulations, job shadowing, and other work-based learning opportunities. By connecting education directly to workforce needs, BHSA would prepare students for immediate employment, postsecondary education, or advanced professional study while strengthening the local healthcare workforce, as well as in rural and tribal communities statewide.

NADC-BUIHWC (Native American Development Corporation and Billings Urban Indian Health and Wellness Center) and Billings Public Schools are currently negotiating a potential lease agreement through which BPS would lease space in BUIHWC's new facility to create three distinct classrooms for BHSA. We are hopeful that the parties can reach a mutually agreeable lease amount and finalize an arrangement that supports both organizations and the students they serve. Any agreement will be subject to the necessary review and approval processes.

Our new facility, anticipated to be completed in spring 2027, is expected to include a health clinic, laboratory, pharmacy, and other integrated health and wellness services such as dental care and physical therapy. Locating BHSA within this setting would offer students valuable exposure to careers in behavioral health, dentistry, physical therapy, clinical care, pharmacy, laboratory services, medical administration, billing and coding, and other essential healthcare fields. BUIHWC professionals may also have opportunities to serve as guest speakers, mentors, or instructors and support appropriate career-exploration and work-based learning experiences.

BHSA represents an important opportunity to expand accessible, career-connected learning for Billing's students while developing a strong and diverse pipeline of future healthcare professionals for all of Montana. BUIHWC supports the approval of this public charter school proposal and looks forward to continuing our work with Billings Public Schools toward a mutually beneficial partnership.

Sincerely,

Leonard Smith
CEO
Native American Development Corporation

ROCKY VISTA UNIVERSITY
MONTANA COLLEGE OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE

Montana College of Osteopathic Medicine
4130 Rocky Vista Way, Billings, MT I (406) 901-2700
Office of the Dean

October 19, 2026

Montana Board of Public Education

Dear Members of the Board:

On behalf of Rocky Vista University (RVU), I am pleased to express support for Billings Public Schools' proposed Billings Health Science Academy (BHSA), slated to open in August 2027. Its focus on preparing high school students for healthcare careers through rigorous coursework, college credit, industry credentials, and meaningful experiences aligns with our commitment to healthcare education and the communities we serve.

My recent meeting with Christine Simonsen, Director of Health Sciences & Community Education, highlighted promising opportunities for collaboration **with RVU's** health science programs located in Billings, Montana, including the Montana College of Osteopathic Medicine, the Master of Medical Sciences program, and the College of Veterinary Medicine. **As BHSA's program develops, we welcome further discussion of:**

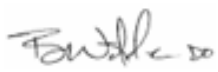
- **Research and mentorship:** Connecting BHSA students with our RVU students for guidance on research and capstone projects.
- **Career exploration**: Providing campus tours and opportunities to learn about healthcare professions, medical education, and pathways to RVU.
- **Classroom engagement**: Exploring opportunities for RVU students to contribute as guest speakers, classroom volunteers, and collaborators in educational activities.
- **Clinical simulation**: Considering appropriate opportunities for BHSA capstone students to participate as simulated patients and/or learners **in RVU's clinical learning environment.**

These potential activities would be developed collaboratively, subject to institutional approval, student readiness, scheduling, and applicable requirements.

BHSA offers a valuable opportunity to inspire young people to pursue healthcare careers and build connections that encourage them to remain in, or return to, the Yellowstone Valley to serve our communities. We support this **vision and look forward to exploring a partnership that benefits students, both institutions, and the region's** healthcare workforce.

Thank you for considering Billings Public Schools' proposal.

Sincerely,



Benjamin Wilde, DO, FAAFP
Acting Dean, RVU-MCOM
Cell: (307) 431-5870
bwilde@rvu.edu

PROCEEDINGS OF
BOARD OF TRUSTEES, SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 2
and
BILLINGS HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 2

REGULAR BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

Monday, October 19, 2026 **5:30 p.m.**

Lincoln Education Center **Board Room** **415 North 30th Street**

MEETING MINUTES

1. WELCOME AND ORIENTATION TO THE MEETING

Trustee Janna Hafer welcomed everyone to the meeting and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Trustees in attendance: Janna Hafer, Zack Terakedis, Tanya Ludwig, Jourdan Guidice, Teresa Larsen, Jennifer Hoffman, Brooke Wagner, Andrea Nemitz, and Luke Ashmore.

Staff in attendance: Dr. Erwin Garcia, Dr. Chris Olszewski, Daniela Walsh (Board Clerk), and Laurie Kvamme (CFO), along with many others.

Trustee Hafer asked the audience to take a moment of silence on behalf of our student, Chase Lantz from Will James MS, who passed away recently.

Welcome to the meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Billings Elementary and High School Districts. The agendas and information about public participation in this meeting are available on the District's website.

2. GIFTS, DONATIONS & RECOGNITIONS

Donations:

1. Paulette Laszlo - donation of $500 to Orchard Elementary School.
2. The Education Foundation raised $217,350 in September, which included donations for Book Vending Machines (going to two middle schools already), Daylis, Spark Awards (formerly Classroom Grants), angel funds, and food insecurity programs. Funds are being raised for our schools through the SUV Raffle and Saturday Live dispersements will be reported next month. As of today, 10/13/2026, we're holding $2,455,444.45 for Daylis Stadium.

Recognitions:

1. Principal Shelli Strouf introduced Coach Jon Kelly, who recognized the Senior HS Girls 2026 State AA State Champion Golf team who recently secured the Class AA state title at Meadow Lark Country Club in Great Falls, marking their first championship since 2023 and the seventh in program history.
2. Joe Halligan, Coordinator for Safety with Billings Public Schools, introduced Sheri Pope and son Michael with his wife Ashlee Pope from "Carey it Forward", a non-profit organization created after Sheri's late husband Carey Pope, donated "Sammy" signs to all Billings Public Schools elementary and middle schools. The signs were delivered to schools on Monday, October 12th. The signs will be displayed in student drop off areas, or near driveways, where they will help increase driver awareness, and be a visible signal that students walking to and from school, and all other foot/scooter traffic need to be watched out for.
3. Joe Halligan introduced the Crisis Counseling Team: Jennifer Moore, Jane Lee, Andrea Hosking, Tami Radokovich, and MacKenzie Umemoto. They bring empathy, support, and calm to provide a space where healing can begin.

4. Melanie Willardson, Director of Community Relations, introduced the North Star Teacher Awards — Rory Jetmore, Will Newman, and Sarah Lord. The work of these teachers aligns with the Strategic Priorities and the Graduate Profile of the district.
5. The following awards were presented by Kaitlin Elliott, Principal of Poly Drive Elementary:
    - Montana PTA - Volunteer of the Year — Leah Frederick (Poly Drive Elementary)
    - Montana PTA - Volunteer of the Year — Jourdan Guidice (Poly Drive Elementary)
    - Montana PTA - Educator of the Year — Nicholas Ottoy (Poly Drive Elementary)
    - Montana PTA - Leadership Award - Poly Drive PTA
    - Montana PTA - PTA Proud Grant - Poly Drive PTA

Trustee Jennifer Hoffman moved first to recognize the people/groups as listed, and accepted these gifts and donations with gratitude. Trustee Andrea Nemitz seconded the motion. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Board Clerk, Daniela Walsh, asked to remove Item 14 h. from the agenda.

Trustee Zack Terakedis moved first to approve the agenda for this evening, removing Item 14 h. Trustee Jennifer Hoffman seconded the motion. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

4. BUDGET DISCUSSION

1. Bravera Bank Statement — Laurie Kvamme presented the statement with interest to date.
2. General Fund Financials — Laurie Kvamme presented the general fund financials for both elementary and high school. The district is still within the acceptable range.

5. COMMUNICATION FROM THE PUBLIC

The Board recognizes the value of public comment on educational issues and the importance of listening to members of the public in its meetings. The Board also recognizes the statutory and constitutional right of the public to participate in governmental operations. The Board encourages members of the public to participate in and express opinions about issues important to the District. This part of the Board's meeting is dedicated to public comment on any public matter that is not on the agenda of this meeting and is within the jurisdiction of the Board of Trustees. Members of the public may also address particular items on this agenda either now or at the time the Board considers the particular item.

Please note that, pursuant to Board policy, the Chair may direct public commentary to ensure an orderly progression of the meeting. This direction may include setting a time limit for public commentary on any particular item. The Chair may also interrupt or terminate an individual's statements when necessary, including when statements are out of order, too lengthy, personally directed, abusive, obscene, or irrelevant. The Board as a whole shall have the final decision in determining the appropriateness of all such rulings by the Chair.

If you have not already done so, please fill out the public comment form available at the back of the room. This will allow the Chair to recognize you before you address the Board. In addition, the Board will receive any written communication at this time.

Public Comments:

1. Jennifer Leligdowicz, President of the Billings Classified Employee Association (BCEA), asking for RESPECT for support staff. Spoke about the average amount a BCEA worker makes at approximately $35,000/year. Asked for the board of trustees to consider support staff, to help these people earn a better income.
2. Beth Verlanic — Administrative Assistant at Burlington Elementary — She is fortunate enough to be able to live on what a secretary makes, because her husband is a retired teacher. Using the 1.5% raise in an example, with one of her custodians in their building. The raise totaled $10/week. Not enough for a tank of gas. Supporting the RESPECT campaign to help fund education better.
3. Jack Hanson — asked for change to district policy Item 14 S. - Policy 8560 — Display of Flags on District Property. This policy reflects state legislatures' ongoing attempt to wage a culture war. It represents a political viewpoint. It prohibits these flags on district property. Somehow, the Gadsden flag (closely associated with the Libertarian Party) and the thin blue line flag (bigoted groups promoting anti-democracy views) are allowed.

6. BOARD CHAIR'S REPORT

1. Urban Renewal Districts Update — Jourdan Guidice discussed the expansion of the new Energy Laboratories building. Additional parking is needed at the ARC center on the Southside. Looking at another parking lot, and the committee is in discussion. Zack Terakedis spoke about the EBURD and the affordable housing units being built. Member of council Mike Boyett said that each TIF district will now be combined into one review committee to review all applications from all 3 TIF districts. Janna Hafer attended the Downtown District meeting, where the Edward Jones building was discussed to be historically renewed. Additionally, the district is working with the Railroad along with 11 properties on Montana Ave to purchase the land, and to sell it to the building owners. All has been favorable so far.
2. AI Questions — this topic will be on hold until next month's meeting.

7. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

1. Latest Data Points — Dr. Erwin Garcia presented the Reading and Math Benchmarking Data for the District. This is not about increasing student scores, but trying to ensure that our students are proficient and at the mastery level in both reading and math. They will be able to better project forward as learners toward graduation. If a student can read at grade level, their attitude toward school changes, and they will be better able to work toward graduation.
2. Expectations of the Leadership Team — presented by Kyra Gaskill and Kim Anthony. This presentation focused on instructional leadership. This empowers teachers and principals. Kim Anthony used the help of a student named Sammy Platt. He talked about self-managing, controlling emotions, working together, and never giving up. Teachers who give continuous feedback about where the student needs to go next with their learning, show the success of the visible learning journey. All elementary and middle schools are now engaged in visible learning.

8. BOARD CLERK'S REPORT

1. Number of Lawsuits — Currently the district has zero lawsuits.
2. Number of Complaints — There are 6 complaints — 3 from the Office of Civil Rights (OCR), 1 from the Office of Public Instructions (OPI) - for our District, 1 Unfair Labor Practice, and 1 from the Human Rights Bureau.

9. BOARD OPERATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

1. City/County/School Meeting Report — Trustee Teresa Larsen spoke about attending this meeting. Zack Terakedis discussed safety around middle schools and high schools not having speed zones. Dr. Garcia stated that the City has a three-phase plan for addressing this issue. The meeting with the State Department of Transportation will happen in December. The District will continue working with the City on the Safe Routes to School program. At this time, we are monitoring the various task forces to weigh in on this community need. Trustee Ludwig asked how we could get the kids not to cross the roads that they aren't supposed to cross. They are crossing between buses, and it's not safe. Administrators have been out talking to and telling the kids to go to the light while the kids are crossing the road down the street. The SROs have tried telling them as well. A school zone light will be very helpful. Trustee Larsen spoke about this issue, as well as Domestic Violence among the community. There was a lot of good discussion among the three entities about these topics. We were able to share how we are seeing how this affects kids in our schools. We are on a good road to a partnership. Trustee Janna Hafer asked about motorized scooters. Dr. Garcia stated that is also at the top of the list.
2. Montana Conference of Educational Leadership (MCEL) Report — Trustee Tanya Ludwig spoke about attending the MCEL meetings. She enjoyed the opening speaker, Mickey Smith, Jr. He brought energy to the room by playing the saxophone. He was funny and engaging. Jennifer Hoffman really enjoyed the speaker as well. There were a lot of people in attendance. The SRO breakout session spoke about foundations that the officers utilize for the reunification process. This is the number one process for schools to figure out. It needs to be addressed by all of our schools. Perhaps some practices would be good. A foundation called "I Love you Guys" was interesting to hear about. The delegate assembly was great. Trustee Teresa Larsen spoke about her breakout sessions concerning school budgets and advocacy. The suggestion was to support the CAMPS proposal, and offered some language about doing that. As far as the Budget, it was interesting to learn about ways to explain school finance to the public. Zack Terakedis spoke about the challenges of making decisions for school districts.

10. PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

- Sam McDonald Stadium at Daylis Update
  - East Side Press Box — Dick Anderson Construction and A & E Design are offering to refresh and update the other press box, free of charge.
  - Stadium Dedication Plaque — Janna Hafer used the attached example of the plaque, asking the board for feedback. Suggested names with revised titles. Chair Hafer will ask Mark Sulser how he feels about his title.
- Riverside Water Issue Discussion
- School Zones Discussion — Trustee Luke Ashmore spoke about City/County/School issues being discussed during that meeting.
- Riverside Middle School Water Issues — Dr. Garcia explained the flooding and water standing in the area. Scott Reiter met with Staley Engineering about the water problems. They are considering French drains that are already in place. By taking away water, it could cause settling in the building. The water floods the parking lot and enters the building through the foundation. This item will be added to this agenda going forward, until the issues are taken care of.
- Potential High School Bond Discussion — Luke Ashmore discussed that next month at board meeting this topic will be brought back for discussion.

11. STAKEHOLDER RELATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

- The Stakeholders' committee requests that the full Board have the opportunity to review the boundary map, transportation routes and costs, the number of properties and students potentially affected, Policy 2050 and P-1, and any administrative considerations regarding the parental request to change the school boundaries from Meadowlark Elementary to Boulder Elementary. Kyra Gaskill discussed the current bus routes for Meadowlark Elementary. The pink areas are not included in busing at this time. The new proposed stop and route would be at Rimrock and 66th Street West. The boundaries of Boulder and Meadowlark are displayed as requested. Lindsay Gran, Executive Director of Transportation, had additional comments in the presentation. Trustee Zack Terakedis discussed adding another route, if students can actually walk to the bus stop already. Everything is put into a program, for how many stops you should have to get kids to school on time. If more stops are added, the bus would be late, or an additional route would need to be added. This is affecting 4 students. Currently, there is not a need for an additional route. The concern is that there are other areas around town that are the same as this one, and it would require changes for all of them if we do this one. Dr. Garcia stated that in 4 years, he has never had anyone request a change in boundary. Zack Terakedis stated that there are requests for additional bus stops all over the district. The reality is that these students are going to the wrong school. There are different ways we have made accommodations. We can redistrict and send them to Boulder. This isn't setting a precedent, we are only responding to a precedent that was set years ago. We have a lot of students going to the wrong school. His opinion is that this is a response to a simple problem. We should stick with what we have in place. Dr. Garcia stated that changing boundary lines is a huge issue. If we grant in-district transfers, that generates more issues. We just need to adjust the boundary lines, as we consider fair.

Trustee Brooke Wagner echoed what Zack said. Trustee Larsen said they are creating a permanent boundary for a temporary situation — these kids will move on to high school in a few years. Trustee Hafer stated that she understood there was an entrance and exit issue. That was why they couldn't get through in another direction. Dr. Garcia said that for the families who were given the opportunity to go to Boulder, the administration felt that was the most logical action at that time. The decision to provide in-district transportation is very complex to make. It will impact a lot of other families. If the board chooses to make an adjustment, that is their right, then the cleanest option is for the district to rezone or restructure that boundary. If the board wants to see that as a logical argument, then the rezone will need to happen. We don't have the capacity to allow this for all other families in this situation. Kyra Gaskill stated that there is no transportation provided if you choose not to attend the school that is in your area. Trustee Brooke Wagner stated that in this case, we can't say what will happen in the future. I'm in support of encompassing the boundary where the kids are already in school, where the kids have already made friends. Kyra Gaskill said that originally there was a bus provided because they needed a ride to Meadowlark. Emails were sent a year ago in September, and another in December 2025 stating that there would be no more changes to the bus routes. Trustee Hafer is concerned that we have already set this in motion, and that the kids need their friendships. Tanya Ludwig stated that these kids have already established friendships for 4–5 years at Boulder. Adding a bus to that area is not that difficult. When she drove the bus, kids were added every day. Kyra Gaskill stated that no one is denying them to attend the school they are choosing. We don't want kids to have to move to a different school.

Trustee Zack Terakedis discussed redistricting (by tax code with potentially 20 families) versus attending Meadowlark, but being allowed to attend at Boulder. Kyra Gaskill stated that providing transportation for 300 additional students could be very problematic. This is the only situation, as far as we are aware.

Trustee Teresa Larsen moved first to follow the administration's suggestion. Families who live outside their school area will have to provide their own transportation if they request to attend an out-of-area school. Trustee Jourdan Guidice seconded the motion. Discussion: Trustee Luke Ashmore asked if action was needed tonight. Trustee Nemitz asked how the family was getting her kids to school at this time. Trustee Wagner stated that these kids have formed relationships at a school, and it's only a simple boundary change that costs the district no additional money. Why can't we make this accommodation? Trustee Terakedis said that we should be able to make an administrative adjustment at any time. The decision at the time the decision was made, puts the board in a position to redistrict. If the demographics were different, the decision might not be the same. This seems like common sense. Brooke Wagner stated that she will take full responsibility for bringing this to the board. It was again stated that the motion being voted on is to follow the administration's suggestion that families who live outside their school area will have to provide their own transportation if they request to attend an out-of-area school.

Roll Call Vote: Trustee Ashmore — No; Trustee Nemitz — Yes; Trustee Hafer — No; Trustee Terakedis — Yes; Trustee Ludwig — No; Trustee Guidice — Yes; Trustee Larsen — Yes; As an elementary school vote only, as stated the motion passed with a 4 Yes to 3 no vote. The motion passed.

12. PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT

The Performance Monitoring Committee was scheduled to meet on October 5th, 2026 to discuss the following:

- Review elementary and middle school district benchmarking data from the fall 2026 testing term.
- Hold open discussion on various topics related to student achievement.

Roger Dereszynski stated that the trends over the past four years, to begin this year, we are higher in both math and reading. He asked for questions regarding the attached presentation. Trustee Larsen asked about the KinderREADy screening process. Is potty training part of that? No, most of those scores are pretty low in the screening, but they advance greatly before the next spring.

13. CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

a. Advisory Committee For Professional Development

1. The committee reviewed Professional Development Updates for recommendations to the board.
2. The committee reviewed PIR Special Requests and any New MIDAS Requests since the last meeting.
3. The Director of Professional Learning provided an update on the Professional Learning Steering Committee.

Trustee Jourdan Guidice moved first to approve the attached Special Requests and Course Proposals as reviewed by the Advisory Committee for Professional Development and recommended to the board. Trustee Luke Ashmore seconded the motion. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

b. Charter Schools Update

i. Billings Multilingual Academy Charter Amendment Request

Since the approval of the original Public Charter School application, there has been a temporary pause in the relocation and resettlement of refugee and asylum-seeking families. This change has directly impacted the number of students entering our community and has contributed to lower-than-anticipated enrollment in the Billings Multilingual Academy. As a result, an adjustment to the original enrollment projections is necessary to reflect current circumstances.

Trustee Jennifer Hoffman moved first to approve the proposed amendment request to revise enrollment projects for the Billings Multilingual Academy. Trustee Tanya Ludwig seconded the motion. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

ii. Billings Health Science AcademyBillings Health Science Academy

HB 549 (2023) authorized the establishment of public charter schools in Montana and tasked the Montana Board of Public Education as the sole entity authorized to enter into public charter contracts with a governing board. There are two types of public charter schools – those operating under an existing local school board and those operating as a new school district under a separate governing board.

Billings Public Schools brings forth the recommendation of a high school health science charter school – Billings Health Science Academy (BHSA) which will operate under the existing Billings Public School Board.

The locations of this charter school are still up in the air. There is a possible private facility being offered with space. Some classes will also be held at the Career Center. This will be for grades 11–12. The cost of years 1–5 are only projected costs. The Future Ready funds received during the 2027–2028 year will be used to help fund this program as well. The first payment will be from last year's graduates based on AP and Dual Credit students. CNA and EMT certifications also count toward this funding. Every class available at the new charter school will also count toward this funding. Staffing needs for the district will increase, as the program expands. The hope is for students to be ready to work, or support themselves through college after graduation from high school.

Trustee Jennifer Hoffman moved first to approve district personnel to pursue approval of the Billings Health Science Academy by the Montana Board of Public Education and authorize the Board Chair to sign the completed application. Trustee Brooke Wagner seconded the motion. Trustee Jourdan Guidice asked again about the staffing being low right now. The classroom capacity is a minimum of 18 students per 3 classrooms. As the program grows, this will expand. The instruction needs to have a low class size, based on the information and work the students will do. The district will hire three teachers. If we have more students applying, we may have to use a lottery system. There will be 45 in the AM and 45 in the PM. We expect a lot more than that. The minimum is 41. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

14. POLICY UPDATES

Policies 1441 (Public Participation), 2320 (Field Trips and Out-of-State Student Travel), and 3255 (Bomb Threats and Threats of Hazardous Substances) are being reviewed by Legal counsel and will be discussed again at the November board meeting. Daniela Walsh stated these policies will be brought to Board Operations Committee in November.

a. Policy 1017, Authorization of SignaturesTrustee Larsen requested a review of this policy due to concerns regarding the use of signature stamps on contracts. With electronic signatures now widely available, the use of signature stamps may create unnecessary confusion and liability. The review will also consider identifying, through procedure, which documents require the Board Chair's signature by law or policy.

The policy has since been reviewed by both the Administration and legal counsel and is presented to the Board for review and consideration.

Trustee Teresa Larsen moved to approve Policy 1017 for first reading, and move forward for second reading at the November 3, 2026, Board Operations Committee meeting. Trustee Jourdan Guidice seconded the motion. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

b. Policy 2335, HIV/AIDS Education and Prevention

HB471: This bill amends the requirements for mandatory notices to parents regarding human sexuality instruction and adds requirements related to identity instruction. In order to comply with the bill, we are recommending an amendment of Policy 2335.

The policy has since been reviewed by both the Administration and legal counsel and is presented to the Board for review and consideration.

Trustee Jennifer Hoffman moved first to approve Policy 2335 for first reading, and move forward for second reading at the November 3, 2026, Board Operations Committee meeting. Trustee Teresa Larsen seconded the motion. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

c. Policy 3120 — Attendance; Procedure 3120-P2

Policy 3120 and Procedure 3120-P2 were reviewed by legal counsel. The attached redlined documents reflect legal counsel's recommended changes for Board review and consideration.

Trustee Jourdan Guidice moved first to approve Policy 3120 for first reading, and move forward for second reading at the November 3, 2026, Board Operations Committee meeting. Trustee Jennifer Hoffman seconded the motion. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

Updated Procedure 3120-P2 is being presented, For Information Only.

d. Policy 3240, Tobacco Free Schools

The attached redlined policy is part of the second set of 3000-series policy reviews. During the committee review, language for vaping was added. Additional language addressing Nicotine was added.

The policy has since been reviewed by both the Administration and legal counsel and is presented to the Board for review and consideration.

Trustee Jennifer Hoffman moved first to approve Policy 3240 for first reading, and move forward for second reading at the November 3, 2026, Board Operations Committee meeting. Trustee Brooke Wagner seconded the motion. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

e. Policy 3310, Student Discipline—Consequences for Violations of Student Code of Conduct

The attached redline policy is part of the third set of 3000-series policies reviewed by the administration and legal counsel. Language was added to better support building administrators with all redline changes coming from MTSBA.

Trustee Jennifer Hoffman moved first to approve Policy 3310 for first reading, and move forward for second reading at the November 3, 2026, Board Operations Committee meeting. Trustee Tanya Ludwig seconded the motion. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

f. Policy 3350, Student Discipline - Due Process

The attached redline policy is part of the third set of 3000-series policies reviewed by the administration and legal counsel. Discussed to merge this policy into Policy 3310. Procedures need to be reviewed by legal before finalizing.

Trustee Jennifer Hoffman moved first to approve the repeal of Policy 3350 for first reading, and move forward for second reading at the November 3, 2026, Board Operations Committee meeting. Trustee Tanya Ludwig seconded the motion. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

g. Policy 3410, Student Health

The attached redline policy is part of the third set of 3000-series policies reviewed by the administration and legal counsel. This policy was reviewed several times by our SPED executive director.

Trustee Jourdan Guidice moved first to approve Policy 3410 for first reading, and move forward for second reading at the November 3, 2026, Board Operations Committee meeting. Trustee Andrea Nemitz seconded the motion. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

h. Policy 3416, Administrating Medicine to Students

The attached redline policy is part of the third set of 3000-series policies reviewed by the administration and legal counsel. Additional redline change "to" for "by"

This item was removed from the agenda for this meeting. ~~Approve Policy 3416 for first reading, and move forward for second reading at the November 3, 2026, Board Operations Committee meeting~~.

i. Policy 3417, Communicable Diseases

The attached redline policy is part of the third set of 3000-series policies reviewed by the administration and legal counsel. Concerns about the financial burden on nurses. Language cleanup.

Trustee Andrea Nemitz moved first to approve Policy 3417 for first reading, and move forward for second reading at the November 3, 2026, Board Operations Committee meeting. Trustee Jourdan Guidice seconded the motion. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

j. Policy 3431, Emergency Treatment

The attached redline policy is part of the third set of 3000-series policies reviewed by the administration and legal counsel. Changes are based on MTSBA wording.

Trustee Jennifer Hoffman moved first to approve Policy 3431 for first reading, and move forward for the second reading at the November 3, 2026, Board Operations Committee meeting. Trustee Teresa Larsen seconded the motion. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

k. Policy 3520, Student Fees, Fines, and Charges

The attached redline policy is part of the third set of 3000-series policies reviewed by the administration and legal counsel.

Two concerns related to our policy compared to MTSBA. One, the redlined portion, deleted the "excessive" supplies. The district cannot withhold a student's diploma — it is not legal to do this. The fees related to school district industrial arts, science, etc. should be the same as MTSBA. We will put in place, as a procedure, a fee schedule to have the 3 high schools work together to decide a maximum cost for each class. This will be added to the Policy as a Procedure. All the fees that are charged to the students, there are ways for every child to receive help to pay, if needed.

Discussion: A question was asked about the range of fees for different high schools. Who will audit these fees going forward? The district financial policies might contain information about auditing these fees. They are also reviewed by the building principal. The Angel Fund and Title I also cover any scholarship fees needed. Trustee Hoffman had a concern that classes offered, related to educational goals, should not have fees charged. She doesn't feel fees should be charged when related to educational goals (required classes). Also, she doesn't like that it says it's aligned with MTSBA, when changes have been made to the wording. "Excessive" might be different to a different family. The law MCA 20-9-214 states: Trustees may require pupils in (extracurricular classes) to be required to pay fees. Fees may be waived for financial hardship. Fees should not go into a building fund. This policy, as the district currently has it written, contradicts the law. Trustee Wagner discussed the difference between fees for "breakage" and supplies used for required classes. Trustee Hoffman stated that a class that is required for graduation should not require fees. This is contradictory to the law. Kyra Gaskill asked how the administration can best prepare this policy for the next review. Trustee Hoffman stated that they should just keep it under the MTSBA policy. Kyra Gaskill asked about deposits to the general fund. Laurie Kvamme stated that it would decrease the amount received from the state. Trustee Hoffman stated that these fees must be deposited into a non-budgeted fund. Trustee Larsen stated that the building budgets come from the general fund.

Policy 3520 was not approved for first reading. Kyra Gaskill and Gordon Klasna will be reviewing the policy based on discussion by the board. The policy will be tabled and re-worked. Trustee Jennifer Hoffman moved first to table Policy 3520 until it can be reworked, reviewed, and brought back for discussion. Trustee Zack Terakedis seconded the motion. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

l. Policy 3550, Student Clubs (change made to "School Approved Activities")

The attached redline policy is part of the third set of 3000-series policies reviewed by the administration and legal counsel.

Addition of extracurricular activities. Our attorney reviewed this and stated that we needed to have all 6 lines versus the MTSBA policy. Non-Curricular Student Groups must be supervised by a district employee.

Discussion: Trustee Terakedis asked about the audit for the ECA accounts related to extracurricular activities. If a school has a club, then how do we audit the existence of these clubs, and where the money goes when the club ends for a few years? We have a lot of homeschool students participating in these clubs. If these students aren't enrolled, who is liable for these kids? Are they required to carry an insurance policy in order to participate? If public schools have to take on the liability of these students, that is not fair to our district. Typically, school liability insurance picks up as secondary insurance to the family primary insurance. The language on the signup form for a sport has the parent release the school of liability. If we take on a student that we have no relationship with, it makes it more difficult for the district. Dr. Garcia called Laurie Kvamme to the podium. He asked about students who are only participating in partial areas of public school. She stated that we receive about 1/8 of ANB funding for a student coming to participate as a homeschool student. They are protected by our liability insurance. This coverage also covers volunteers, as a blanket coverage for the district.

Policy 3550 was not approved for first reading. Gordon Klasna will be reviewing the policy based on discussion by the board. The policy will be tabled and re-worked. Trustee Andrea Nemitz moved first to table Policy 3550 until it can be reworked, reviewed, and brought back for discussion. Trustee Zack Terakedis seconded the motion. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

m. Policy 3600, Student Records

The attached redline policy is part of the third set of 3000-series policies reviewed by the administration and legal counsel. Cross-references reviewed.

Trustee Andrea Nemitz moved first to approve Policy 3600 for first reading, and move forward for the second reading at the November 3, 2026, Board Operations Committee meeting. Trustee Zack Terakedis seconded the motion. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

n. Policy 3606, Transfer of Student Records

The attached redline policy is part of the third set of 3000-series policies reviewed by the administration and legal counsel. Added some cross-references.

Trustee Jourdan Guidice moved first to approve Policy 3606 for first reading, and move forward for the second reading at the November 3, 2026, Board Operations Committee meeting. Trustee Luke Ashmore seconded the motion. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

o. Policy 3608, Receipt of Confidential Records

The attached redline policy is part of the third set of 3000-series policies reviewed by the administration and legal counsel. Added some cross-references — NF-1 student records — BPS 3600 P

Trustee Jourdan Guidice moved first to approve Policy 3608 for first reading, and move forward for the second reading at the November 3, 2026, Board Operations Committee meeting. Trustee Brooke Wagner seconded the motion. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

p. Policy 5021, Fingerprints and Criminal Background Investigations

HB745: This bill requires adoption by school districts of a student safety policy requiring a fingerprint criminal history check prior to any individual (employees, volunteers, chaperones, etc.) having unsupervised contact with students. In order to comply with the bill, we are recommending making changes to our current Policy 5021.

The policy has since been reviewed by both the Administration and legal counsel and is presented to the Board for review and consideration.

Trustee Jennifer Hoffman moved first to approve Policy 5021 for first reading, and move forward for a second reading at the November 3, 2026, Board Operations Committee meeting. Trustee Tanya Ludwig seconded the motion. Discussion: This policy is being updated to include fingerprinting for anyone who comes into the building to volunteer. There was a period of time when we were unclear about the stipulations. Repeat activities must be fingerprinted. Anyone who comes in without the constant supervision of a staff member. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

q. Policy 5255, Disciplinary Action (Changed to "Free to Speak Act")

HB400: This bill prohibits adverse employment action or student disciplinary action against an individual that declines to provide their own pronouns or declines to address another person by a name other than their legal name or by using a pronoun inconsistent with the person's sex. In order to comply with this bill, we are recommending new Policy 5255.

The policy has since been reviewed by both the Administration and legal counsel and is presented to the Board for review and consideration.

Trustee Jennifer Hoffman moved first to approve Policy 5255 for first reading, and move forward for second reading at the November 3, 2026, Board Operations Committee meeting. Trustee Teresa Larsen seconded the motion. Trustees Larsen, Hafer, Hoffman, Wagner, Nemitz and Ashmore voted unanimously in the affirmative. Trustees Ludwig, Guidice, and Terakedis voted no on this change. The motion passed.

r. Policy 8410, Records Management

This policy was reviewed against MTSBA's model policy to simplify the language and make the appropriate updates.

The policy has since been reviewed by both the Administration and legal counsel and is presented to the Board for review and consideration.

Trustee Jennifer Hoffman moved first to approve Policy 8410 for first reading, and move forward for second reading at the November 3, 2026, Board Operations Committee meeting. Trustee Zack Terakedis seconded the motion. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

s. Policy 8560, Display of Flags and Banners on District Property

HB819: This bill prohibits the display of flags or banners on District property other than specific types of flags identified in the bill. In order to comply with the bill, we are recommending adoption of a new Policy 8560.

The policy has since been reviewed by both the Administration and legal counsel and is presented to the Board for review and consideration.

Discussion: Trustee Zack Terakedis discussed this law being poorly written. What is a historical flag? If you look online, you get 70 different flags. It can be state law, but the district does not need to alter our policy. He stated that he would not vote for something in our policy. Trustee Luke Ashmore also expressed his disappointment with this law by the state. He feels it's a very bad law.

Trustee Jennifer Hoffman moved first to approve Policy 8560 for first reading, and move forward for second reading at the November 3, 2026, Board Operations Committee meeting. Trustee Brooke Wagner seconded the motion.

Role Call Vote: Trustee Ashmore - No; Trustee Nemitz - Yes; Trustee Wagner - Yes; Trustee Hoffman - Yes; Trustee Hafer - No; Trustee Terakedis - No; Trustee Ludwig - No; Trustee Guidice - No; Trustee Larsen - Yes. The vote had 5 "No" votes, and 4 "Yes" votes. The motion failed.

15. TRUSTEE SCHOOL VISITS

Trustee Jennifer Hoffman reported having visited the Washington Innovation Center. Principal Ali Zent toured with her, and they discussed the Early College High School.

Trustee Tanya Ludwig toured two schools — Bitterroot and Broadwater. The KinderREADy program at Bitterroot was adorable. They were learning sign language. She learned about the walking school bus, talking about safer ways to get to school. At Broadwater, it was sad to see the kids playing in the back of the school in a chain-linked area. They really need to be able to play in their playground again. It's just sad. The parents are united to help make this situation better. It's just not normal.

Trustee Brooke Wagner visited Skyview High School. She had a great visit with the principal.

Trustee Jennifer Hoffman spoke about the district's social media posts. The attendance incentive days have been fun to see. Such a great idea!

16. CONSENT AGENDA

Trustee Jennifer Hoffman moved first to approve the Consent Agenda. Trustee Andrea Nemitz seconded the motion. All voted unanimously in the affirmative. The motion passed.

a. Resolution to Sell/Dispose of District Personal Property

School District #2 personal property, in the form of library books, has fully depreciated and has become undesirable and unsuitable for School District purposes.

Per Mont. Code Ann. Sec. 20-6-604(1), the Board of Trustees may sell or otherwise dispose of personal property upon a finding that the personal property has or is about to become abandoned, obsolete, undesirable, or unsuitable for school purposes. The Board of Trustees must adopt a resolution to sell or otherwise dispose of the personal property because it is or is about to become abandoned, obsolete, undesirable, or unsuitable for the school purposes of the district. Upon approval of the resolution, public notice must be provided pursuant to the requirements of Mont. Code Ann. Sec. 20-20-204, followed by a waiting period of 14 days to allow for taxpayer appeal. Per District Policy 7251, the trustees shall sell or dispose of the real or personal property in a reasonable manner determined to be in the best interest of the District.

The board approved to adopt the proposed Resolution regarding personal property that is abandoned, obsolete, undesirable, or unsuitable for the school purposes of Billings School District No. 2 and acknowledge that library books, as specified in the document attached to the Resolution, may be otherwise disposed of by the Superintendent.

b. reACT Agreement with Riverstone Health

The Board is asked to approve entering into an Agreement with RiverStone Health regarding implementing the reACT program in the middle schools for the 2026-2027 school year.

The board approved the reACT Agreement with Riverstone Health.

c. Personnel Report

Pursuant to Montana law, the Board of Trustees employs and dismisses District employees. MCA § 20-3-324. Each month, the Superintendent and our Human Resource Services staff present to the Board a personnel report that includes recommended hiring. The report also includes extracurricular activities, retirements, resignations, leaves of absence of one semester or longer, and, infrequently, recommended dismissals. The Board acts upon the Superintendent's employment recommendations by accepting the personnel report. The attached personnel report includes the Superintendent's current employment recommendations.

The board approved the Personnel Report.

d. Expenditures of Money - September 2026

The Expenditures of Money for the month of September were reviewed and authorized in accordance with district regulations and financial controls that have been established to ensure that all expenditures are in compliance with school, state, and federal laws, policies, and procedures.

These procedures include authorization of expenditures by the appropriate supervisor and review by the finance department to ensure the expenditure has been authorized by budget and charged to the correct program. Attached are the detailed warrants for the month of September. In line with our unwavering dedication to transparency and responsibility, we place a strong emphasis on granting the community access to pertinent financial data.

We are pleased to outline the following avenues through which the public can obtain more detailed expenditure information:

1. District Clerk's Office at Lincoln Center: Starting every Friday afternoon before a Monday Board meeting, employee gross pay information will be made available for public review at the District Clerk's office located at Lincoln Center.
2. Board Meetings and Records Requests: Should you wish to access this data outside the regular schedule, you may do so by submitting a records request. For your convenience, a Chromebook will be provided to facilitate viewing information stored on a USB drive during Board meetings.
3. Minutes Approval and Documentation: To ensure clarity and accuracy, the approved meeting minutes will comprehensively document the options available for reviewing employee gross pay information.

Our primary objective is to foster a deeper understanding and trust within the community regarding our organizational operations, all while adhering strictly to relevant privacy laws and regulations. See § 20-3-323 (2) MCA & § 20-9-213 (2) MCA.

Executive Summary:		
Claims (Paper Checks)	$	10,082,955.14
Procurement Card	$	615,173.03
Wells Fargo	$	450,921.66
First Interstate Bank	$	164,251.37
Arbiter Financial Payments (Referee Fees)	$	35,783.52
EBMS ACH Payments (Third Party Admin for Health Plan)	$	144,255.88
MiCare Building Rental Monthly Payment	$	1,400.00
Total	**$**	**10,879,567.57**
Federal	**$**	**801,279.55**
Medicare	$	*153,823.62*
FICA	$	*657,726.58*
State	$	*337,530.77*
Payroll Tax Deposit	**$**	**1,950,360.52**
Payroll Warrants & Direct Deposits	$	*7,587,263.28*
Health Plan	$	*318,988.37*
125 Plan (Medical & Childcare FLEX)	$	*158,502.25*
AFLAC	$	-
Legal Services	$	*296.85*
Supplemental Life	$	*40,115.15*
PERS Payments	$	*118,720.33*
TRS Payments	$	*759,583.76*
Union Dues	$	*27,789.65*
457 Plan	$	*15,440.50*
Tax Sheltered Annuity Plan	$	*101,815.83*
Education Foundation/United Way Donation	$	*1,296.00*
Child Support Processing Fee	$	*40.00*
Garnishments	$	*17,779.60*
Child Support Enforcement Division Garnishment	$	*2,739.73*
District Employee Cell Phone Stipends	$	*11,551.87*
Total Gross Employee Pay	**$**	**11,112,283.69**

The board approved the Expenditures of Money for September 2026.

e. Financial & Investment Reports - September 2026 - Unaudited Financial & Investment Reports

Billings Public Schools

The attached financial and investment reports are for the month of September 2026. They are unaudited.

The following procedures have not been completed for September 2026:

1. Reconciliation of cash/investments and warrants payable to the Yellowstone County Treasurer balances at month-end.
2. The recording of revenue collected by the Yellowstone County Treasurer during the month of September 2026.
3. CS101/CS201 Account Expenditures by Fund – September 2026.
4. CS101/CS201 Account Revenues by Fund – September 2026.
5. Investment Reports – September 2026 — Unaudited.

The board approved Financial Reports – September 2026— Unaudited.
The board approved Investment Reports — September 2026 — Unaudited.

f. Minutes of Board Meetings

The board approved the following Board Meeting minutes:

- Monday, September 21, 2026 – Regular Board of Trustees Meeting – 5:30 PM, Lincoln, Boardroom
- Wednesday, October 14, 2026 – Special Board Meeting (City/County/School) – 12:00 PM, City of Billings — Chamber

g. Minutes of Committee Meetings

The board approved the following board committee minutes:

- Tuesday, October 6, 2026 – Stakeholder Relations Committee – 10:30 AM, Lincoln, Boardroom
- Tuesday, October 6, 2026 – Planning & Development Committee – 11:00 AM, Lincoln, Boardroom
- Tuesday, October 6, 2026 – Board Operations Committee – 12:00 Noon, Lincoln, Boardroom
- Tuesday, October 6, 2026 – Advisory Committee for Professional Development – 4:00 PM, Room 219

17. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion, and no objection, the meeting was adjourned at 8:40 PM.

Jana Hafer, Chair

Karen Yose, Recorder