



December 2023



Happy Holidays to our Bengal Community!

After a tumultuous fall, I don't want to miss and opportunity to 'Thank You' for the amazing kids you send to us at Helena High School. If you ask any member of our school, past or present, what is your favorite thing about HHS, to a person they will say, the kids. Through our challenges your students continued to shine brightly.

As is tradition, our staff and students are coordinating food and toy drives and other fundraising activities for our community. These events, coordinated through our student council and counseling center will provide a little extra boost to our families and bring a little cheer to all. If you are interested in helping with either of these causes, please reach out to Samantha Humphrey (Student Council) or Chrissy Murgel (Counseling).

During the hustle and bustle of the season, find some time to relax and enjoy the musical talents of our various groups. More information about times and dates can be found in this newsletter.

I want to thank you all for wrapping your arms around us during our challenging fall. I have endless gratitude for our community. I wish you all a Holiday Season filled with Peace.

Go Bengals!
Steve Thennis, Principal
Helena High School

SAVE THE DATE!

Friday, Dec 8-Shakespeare
in the School, HHS Gym

Tuesday, Dec 12-Winter
Choir Concert, HMS 7:00
PM

Tuesday, Dec 19-Winter Or-
chestra HHS & CHS con-
cert-CHS Auditorium 7:00
PM

Dec 24-Jan 1st, 2024
NO SCHOOL -Winter Break

January 2024
Monday, January 15, 2024
Martin Luther King Holiday

January 17-19, 2023
1st semester testing

January 23, 2023
3rd Quarter begins



Attendance News

Just a reminder for Parents/Guardians
You only need to reach a "live" person
if you are calling your student out with-
in the hour.

If you are calling to excuse your stu-
dent for the day or for coming in late,
please just leave a voicemail.



SENIOR "GOOD LUCK" ADVERTISEMENTS HELENA HIGH VIGILANTE YEARBOOK

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: January 1st, 2024

Please keep this date in mind and begin making your "good luck" advertisement well in advance — you never know when technological difficulties will slow you down!

CREATING YOUR ADVERTISEMENT

Go to the Yearbook Order Center website, select Helena High, MT . Or, visit <https://www.yearbookordercenter.com/>. Our school order code is 7088. Select the size of advertisement you would like to create and begin the process of creating your advertisement! If you run into problems, please contact me (Ms. Walsh at mwalsh@helenaschools.org) and I will reach out to our representatives.

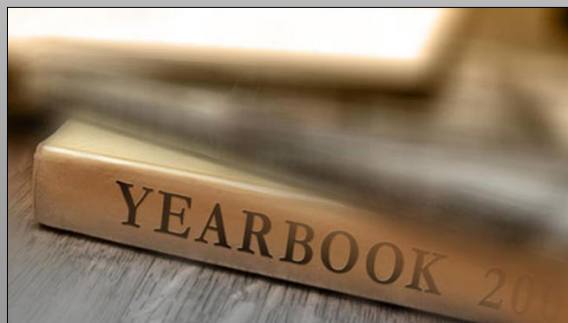
SENIOR ADS – SIZES AND PRICES

Full page	8.333 x 11.333	\$325
1/2 page	8.333 x 7.556	\$165
1/4 page	8.333 x 3.778	\$100
1/8 page	2.778 x 3.778	\$55

DON'T FORGET TO PURCHASE A YEARBOOK!

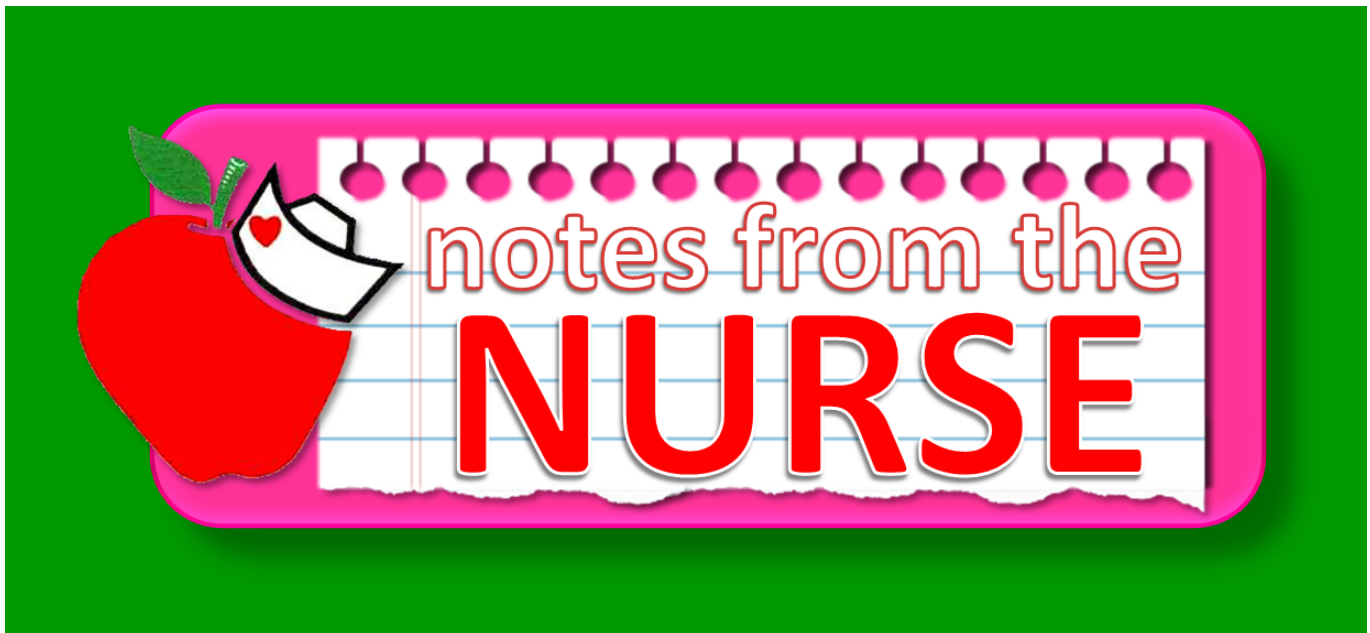
Yearbooks cost \$75 until February 1st.

After that date, the cost will be \$85 for the rest of the year.



American Welding Society Club is collecting cell phones for Cell Phones for Soldiers Inc. We will be collecting phones from November 1, 2023 to January 31st, 2024.

You can drop all cell phones off at the Helena High School Main Office or the Welding Shop at 1300 Billings Ave. during school hours.



November is *Tobacco Awareness* month but let's continue to talk about tobacco, nicotine, laced products, and vaping. We need our parent and student partners on this one. Prevention is key. Vaping is not safer than cigarettes. Daily use doubles the risk of heart attack. Most teens who use tobacco become addicted as their developing brain makes it easier to get hooked. Addiction takes over changing kids' behavior, activities, and academics. Most truly want to take control back, but they often need our help but likely won't ask for it. Nicotine addiction harms the developing teen brain and can cause lifelong challenges. Here are resources for continuing your conversation with your kids to prevent using this drug in the first place and resources for help with quitting.

My Life My Quit offers free help for Teens: <https://mt.mylifemyquit.org/index>
TEEN Smokefree.gov: <https://teen.smokefree.gov/>
CATCH my Breath has a Parent toolkit: <https://catch.org/program/vaping-prevention#parents>

Vaping: what parents need to know: <https://drugfree.org/drugs/vaping/>

We hear our students buy pre-filled single use vapes with unknown ingredients from someone in the neighborhood or just a text away. These products can be laced with other drugs including marijuana and fentanyl. Please speak to your teens about the risk of nicotine addiction and the risk of unknown substances in these products. Please be aware that a vape can mimic any product or device you can imagine. If you suspect your child is using, please use the resources above.

Questions or concerns? Emily Rodway RN erodway@helenaschools.org or 324-2216. Wishing this special time of year helps you find a little space to truly **Be With** those you care about.

Holiday Baskets/Bins 2023

The HHS Student Council is continuing Helena High's tradition of collecting and donating food bins for the families of HHS students in need over winter break. In the past, baskets have been donated by departments, teams, clubs, classes, individual staff members and others.

We ask that bins contain a full Christmas holiday meal for a family (*see essential items*) in addition to items that families can eat throughout the break (*see strongly suggested items*), since our students lose their school provided breakfasts and lunches that they receive when school is in session. Please see the lists below for suggested items:

ITEMS TO INCLUDE IN HOLIDAY BINS	
ESSENTIAL ITEMS	STRONGLY SUGGESTED IN ADDITION TO ESSENTIAL ITEMS
<i>Please no perishable, refrigerated or frozen items</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Van's Thriftway "Punches" cards* (they can NOT be used for tobacco or alcohol) around \$25-\$30	<input type="checkbox"/> Peanut Butter
<input type="checkbox"/> Boxed or Instant Mashed Potatoes (please no bags of fresh potatoes as they spoil quickly)	<input type="checkbox"/> Jelly or Jam
<input type="checkbox"/> Stuffing	<input type="checkbox"/> Tuna Fish
<input type="checkbox"/> Gravy Mix (2-3 packets preferred)	<input type="checkbox"/> Cereal
<input type="checkbox"/> Rolls or biscuit mix	<input type="checkbox"/> Canned raviolis/pastas
<input type="checkbox"/> Canned fruit and/or Cranberries	<input type="checkbox"/> Granola Bars/Cereal Bars
<input type="checkbox"/> Canned vegetables	<input type="checkbox"/> Soups (NO ramen please)
<input type="checkbox"/> Canned Yams	<input type="checkbox"/> Chili
<input type="checkbox"/> Dessert Mixes	<input type="checkbox"/> Pasta with sauce
<input type="checkbox"/> Something fun (puzzles, games, or movie passes, craft project)	<input type="checkbox"/> Snacks
<input type="checkbox"/> Anything else you think may be useful	<input type="checkbox"/> Anything else you think may be useful
* For purchase of a Turkey or Ham	

Please place donations in large Tupperware type bins, rather than cardboard boxes or wicker baskets

If you would like to participate in the Holiday Baskets/Bins this year, please email chall@helenaschools.org or return the bottom of this form to Corena VanDaele, in Counseling by **Monday, November 27th**, so we know how many to expect!

Please bring the completed Holiday Bin to Corena in the Counseling Office, by **Friday December 15th**.

Thank you for your generosity!

HHS Student Council

Return to Corena VanDaele in Counseling

Cut here!

Name of Group/Individual: _____ Number of Baskets: _____

Contact Person: _____ Contact phone or email: _____

School Leadership Team Update

At Helena High, we use data to guide our efforts in ensuring the success of every student. Each month, we'll share a snapshot of the data we work with to keep you informed about our focus.

Public schools handle a lot of data every day. Keeping track of absent students is a small part of this data, but it's crucial for our operations. We need your children in school to teach them effectively. When students miss school, it becomes much harder to fill gaps in their learning.

This is especially noticeable when we look at failure rates in classes and overall graduation rates, especially for freshmen. A student's performance in their freshmen year is a strong indicator of whether they will graduate. High school graduation, in turn, is a significant predictor of success later in life. We aim to keep students engaged and attending school to increase our graduation rate and reduce our failure rate.

HHS values building relationships with students, a crucial first step in getting them to come to school. We're here to support your efforts as guardians to ensure they attend school regularly. If you're facing challenges, please reach out to their teachers, counselor, or assistant principal.

For more information on nationwide concerns about chronic absenteeism, scan one of the QR codes to access an article.

"Six Hidden (and Not-So-Hidden) Factors Driving America's Student Absenteeism Crisis"
by Greg Toppo



"Study finds the school absenteeism rate is double what it was before COVID" by Grant Blankenship



Should you have questions about HHS data or goals for the year, please reach out to Mr. Thennis or Mrs. Meghan Schulte. For inquiries regarding district data and assessments, contact Mrs. Kaitlyn Hess.

Thank you for supporting your student's journey to become the best Bengal they can be!

Helena High Travel Club

It's not too late to give the gift of travel. Travel club advisors Randy Hussey & Megan Walsh are taking students on adventures abroad every year and we encourage students, parents, and the community to join us on our annual adventures. Travel Club students fundraise by working concessions, host events (bake sales and business sponsor nights), as well as sell a variety of products to mitigate costs. Our adventures scheduled to date are:



Summer 2024 **Australia & New Zealand** (in conjunction with CHS travel club) www.eftours.com/2553540YV

Spring Break 2025 **Scandinavia**
www.eftours.com/2617819ND

Summer 2025 **Thailand, Cambodia, & Vietnam** <https://www.eftours.com/2641061hb>

Spring Break 2026 **Japan**
Summer 2026 **TBD**

If you or someone you know is interested in joining us on one or all our future adventures, please contact us - Mr. Hussey (rhussey@helenaschools.org) or Ms. Walsh (mwalsh@helenaschools.org).
Thank you and Happy Holidays

HELENA HOLIDAY HELPER



THE CHRISTMAS GIVING TREE



The Cathedral of St. Helena & Good Samaritan Ministries partner to ensure gifts for children on Christmas morning.

REGISTRATION DETAILS

Cathedral Center (across the parking lot from the Cathedral)

REGISTRATION

Monday -Thursday, 9AM -2PM
Friday 9AM -2PM
November 13 - December 12

WHAT TO BRING

- Picture ID for the guardian
- Birth certificate for each child

DISTRIBUTION

December 15 - December 16 at 530 N. Ewing Street.

QUESTIONS

Jennifer at 406-442-5825

QUEEN CITY WHEEL HOUSE



LOCATION

1015 Poplar St. Helena, MT
qcwheelhouse@gmail.com

HOURS

Sun-Tues Closed
Wed-Fri 3:30pm-5:30pm
Sat 9am-12pm

PRICING

- For children 5 and under, we offer free bicycles based on our availability (limit 2 bikes per family).
- 24-inch boys and girls bikes start at \$125 – \$175
- Adult 26-inch and 700c bikes range from \$150 – \$450



TOYS FOR TOTS



PARTICIPANT IN
2020, 2021, or 2022



NOT A PARTICIPANT
IN 2020, 2021, or 2022

REGISTER ONLINE



DISTRIBUTION

Confirmation email
will allow each family
to select a pickup
time slot.

REGISTER IN PERSON

Dec. 3 11am-2pm
Dec. 4 2pm-5pm
Dec. 6 2pm-5pm

Location: Lewis and
Clark Library

WHAT TO BRING

- Photo ID for the parent/guardian
- Each child's documentation
- Acceptable documents include: birth certificate, social security card, insurance card, school records, tax return, or court documents
- Copies are not kept!
- Notified on the spot if children qualify.
- Confirmation email will allow each family to select a pickup time slot.



HELENA FOOD SHARE MEAL SIGN UP

WAYS TO REGISTER

- Online at HelenaFoodShare.org (QR code)
- Call (406) 443-3663
- In-person during pantry hours

Dec 1st Sign up begins for Christmas

DISTRIBUTION DATES

SUN Dec 18th at at St. Mary's Catholic, 1700 Missoula Ave., noon-3:00

MON Dec 19th at the Lewis Street Pantry, 1616 Lewis St., 9:00-6:00

GOD'S LOVE HOLIDAY MEALS

533 N Last Chance Gulch St. (406) 442-7000
Christmas Day 1pm



HELENA FOOD SHARE PANTRY HOURS

MON 12:30 pm – 6:30 pm

TUES 12:30 pm – 3:30 pm

WED 12:30 pm – 3:30 pm

THURS 12:30 pm – 6:30 pm

FRI 12:30 pm – 3:30 pm



THE SALVATION ARMY FOOD PANTRY

MON 10am-4pm (closed 12-12:45pm)

TUES 10am-4pm (closed 12-12:45pm)

WED 10am-4pm (closed 12-12:45pm)

THURS 10am-4pm (closed 12-12:45pm)

FRI 8am - 12pm

REQUIRMENTS

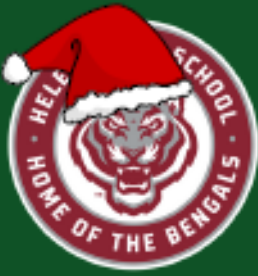
1. application
2. photo id

SOCIAL SERVICES FREEZER

Cooler and freezer stocked with foods accessible Monday- Friday during normal business hours. Items can include any variety of bread, deli items, pastries, and sandwiches, which have been cooked and are ready to just be reheated. This is an additional service that is provided daily to anyone. Posted daily limit per household and this service does not count towards food pantry assistance.

1330 Hudson St, Helena, MT
(406) 442-8244





COUNSELING NEWS

HELPING YOU HELP YOUR CHILD FIND SUCCESS

DECEMBER 2023

As we come upon the winter and holiday season, please remember to take care of yourself.



Holiday and seasonal depression, anxiety and stress can affect anyone at any age. There are many things happening around the holidays that can act as triggers. We can easily lose touch with the joy of the holiday season when negative feelings creep into our minds. **Be proactive about your mental health.**

Helena Public Schools believes that mental wellness is critical to the academic success of students. Some children go through temporary periods of stress, sadness or anxiety due to multiple factors, such as the loss of a family member, a relationship breakup, or changing to a new school. For other students, these periods of stress, sadness or anxiety can be more than just situational, and can be a sign your child is struggling.

As a result, Helena School District has partnered with The Rural Behavioral Health Institute to make wellness screenings available to our high school students for free. There is an option to opt out of the screening. Screening will take place during school hours in a private setting at Helena High.

FIVE TIPS FOR BEATING THE HOLIDAY BLUES

CHILL OUT. Avoid overbooking yourself and make sure to take time for self-care.

HIBERNATE. Make sure you get enough sleep.

BREAK OUT THE ICE SKATES. Take time to exercise, even if it's just taking a spin around the rink.

DON'T FREEZE PEOPLE OUT. Spend time with people who love and support you.

CONGRATULATIONS

MBI:

Ida Brown
Finn Morrison
Carter Kraft
Isabeau Smith

Exchange Club:

Trey Schlepp
Ryan Maus
Lyla Ackerman

FOOD PANTRY



The Counseling Department has a food pantry for students to pick up a snack or lunch during the school day. In addition, we have weekend bags available to pick up on Friday's!

If your student could benefit from this, please encourage them to stop by our office - we have lots available and are happy to be able to help the families of Helena High School in this way.

UPCOMING EVENTS

If you're interested in the events hosted at HHS, sign up at bit.ly/hhsvisits and we'll send you reminders and a pass if you need one.



FAFSA Night- January 3rd-

Library 4-7pm

Reminder to attend this FAFSA night for all the NEW updates with FAFSA

Visit:

<https://hhs.helenaschools.org/counseling-and-career-guidance/financial-aid/>

Junior Parent Night - January 8th @ 5:30 PM

Join us to chat about prepping for your students Junior year!



OTHER IMPORTANT DATES

WINTER BREAK - December 22, 2023 - January 1, 2024
SEMESTER TESTS - January 17-19, 2024

It's time to be working on scholarship applications!

If you're not going to a 4-year school or don't have a very high GPA, don't worry. There are lots of opportunities still available to you. Make sure to read the details of the scholarships listed on the HHS page to see what will be a good fit for you!

bit.ly/scholarshiphhs

Research opportunities. Keep an eye on the HHS scholarship page at bit.ly/scholarshiphhs. This page is updated regularly, so check back often.

Request letters of recommendation. Pick up the "requesting a letter of rec" pamphlet in the Counseling Center or download a copy from the scholarship page.

Track deadlines. Follow the link above to download a Scholarship Checklist.

FAFSA. Some school-specific scholarships will require information from your FAFSA to be considered for the award. Make sure you've submitted yours! And remember that MT schools have a priority deadline of December 1.

SCHOLARSHIP DEADLINES IN DECEMBER & JANUARY:

Dell Scholarship

opens 12/1, closes 3/15/24

Chadron State College-Instagram Scholarship

Deadline 12/7/24

Pride Foundation & GSBA Scholarship Fund

Deadline 1/7/24

Jackie Robinson Scholarship

Deadline 1/11/24

Montana Jaycee Foundation

Deadline: 01/13/24

Soroptimist Int'l of Helena - Margaret Chivers

deadline 1/15/24

Montana Wildlife Federation-Phil Tawney Scholarship

deadline 1/16/24

Soroptimist Int'l of Helena - New Adventures Educational Scholarship

"for students enrolling in a non-traditional career program, or two-year degree program
deadline 1/31/24

ACT PREP WORKSHOP

February 5 & 6 2024

@Capital High school

Stay tuned for more information