

GO BENGALS!



March 2024

<http://hhs.helenaschools.org>

A Message From the Principal's Desk

Dear HHS Community –

I am looking forward to the spring season and all the excitement that comes with the closing of the chapter of the 2023-2024 school year, especially for our seniors.

Today I am writing a plea to our families regarding attendance. Fully recognizing that if you are reading this, you are already engaged, and your child is most likely attending school regularly. However, we at HHS, along with schools across the country, are experiencing levels of absenteeism that we haven't encountered before. This is most likely a lingering result of the pandemic and what is most concerning is that experts predict it will get worse before it gets better.

Attendance matters for a variety of reasons, starting with how much we enjoy working with your child on a consistent basis. The daily presence of our students enhances the community that has been built in the classroom. Beyond that, attendance is important for:

1. **Academic Achievement.** I read a quote once upon a time that stated 90% of success is showing up. Students that attend school regularly perform better academically than students that are chronically absent. As the lesson progresses, students that demonstrate chronic absenteeism become lost and frustrated when they receive truncated instruction during a unit.
2. **Maximizing learning opportunities, i.e. what we are doing here is important!** Each teacher plans lessons to offer unique experiences that cannot be replicated elsewhere. On many occasions, students that are chronically absent most likely receive just snippets of what the class experience was like. Whether it was a lab, or group discussion or a demonstration, it just isn't feasible to replicate this in a one on one experience.
3. **Connectedness:** Beyond academics, school is a place where students build relationships and friendships with their peers. A strong classroom culture relies on each student contributing every day. Absence those voices and perspectives lessens the impact of the instruction. Regular attendance allows students to be actively involved in the school community.
4. **Strong Work Habits for life beyond high school.** Regular attendance provides the discipline students will need for post-secondary education as well as job habits that every employer seeks. Punctuality and reliability are highly valued traits.

We also understand that chronic absenteeism can be much more complex than simple school avoidance. We know that families encounter challenges that impact your ability to get your child to school. If this is the case, reach out, let us know the struggles. We want to partner in solving some of these difficulties ultimately leading to a more successful student.

Thanks for being involved in this great community!

Go Bengals!

Steve Thennis

Principal



SAVE THE DATE

- March 19—Band and Orchestral Pre-Festival Concert 7p.m. HHS Gym
- March 25-29—Spring Break NO SCHOOL
- April 9—Juniors only day—ACT (grades 9, 10, and 12 will have remote learning day)

Sign up for Treble Choir or Tenor-Bass Choir!

Not on your schedule in August next year? Talk to your counselor and they will change your schedule! Talk to your friends and get signed up. The more, the merrier! Meet some new friends, become a musician, and be involved in the school and music community.

For questions or to schedule an audition, contact Mrs. Kohoutek via email or Teams.

mkohoutek@helenaschools.org

Choir Club President, Lyla Ackerman

lackerman@helenastudent.org



100th ANNUAL VIGILANTE PARADE

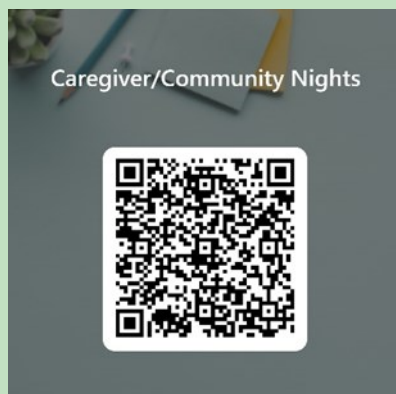
The **100th** Vigilante parade, the oldest running high school parade in the country, begins at high noon on May 3rd in downtown Helena! This beloved and special tradition continues each year only with the generous support of our community. We are once again seeking donations of cash, gift cards/certificates, or merchandise suitable for high school-aged students. This year for those who wish to contribute money, it's even easier! Simply scan one of the QR codes below, follow the instructions, and donate online. Gift cards/certificates or merchandise can be mailed or dropped off at Capital High School or Helena High School. Thank you for your continued support of our students and this community event!



Caregiver/Community Nights

We are working with OPI on our accreditation for the 2023-2024 school year. If you have attended any community nights/events at HHS, could you please fill out the form by scanning the QR code. They include Freshmen Parent Night, Sophomore Parent Night, Junior Parent Night, FAFSA night, Open House, etc. This was also sent out by Mr. Thennis in an email at the end of February.

It should only take about a minute to click through. We greatly appreciate your help in this single aspect of compliance. Go Bengals!

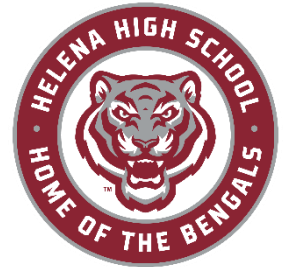


Attendance News

Students, please remember to check in and out of the attendance office when you are coming and/or going outside of your regular schedule. Parents, if you are excusing your student for an appointment,

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 our data and goals to keep you informed of our focus.



As a staff, we have focused on two main goals – **Active Engagement** from our students and **Instructional Collaboration** among our colleagues. Those continue to be a focus going into second semester.

This month, our SLT offered breakout training sessions all about engagement during our All-Staff at the beginning of the month. There were four sessions which contained a “low prep” strategy that can be implemented in those moments when a teacher feels like the attention of the students has dropped, an “intentionally planned” strategy that takes a bit more frontloading and prep from the teacher but results in high engagement from the students, and a refresher on the writing practices we implemented last year.

Our continuous goal this year is to engage each student and learn from each other. We need your support from home to do so. If students aren't present in school, they cannot learn. “Present” goes for both physically and mentally present. They need to physically be within the four walls of the building and in the classrooms to learn the material. They also need to be mentally engaged and not distracted by phones and other technology. Your backup on those two items is essential.

Once the students are here physically and mentally, we can begin to engage them. However, even the most interesting and carefully crafted lessons will have little impact on a student who makes no effort to learn. Taylor Swift we are not. We have seen an increase in apathy amongst teenagers, which is a nationwide trend. Teens have always been stubborn to answer the question “What do you care about?” but it seems to have taken on epic proportions. We are doing our best to battle it, but we can be limited. We have wonderful and behaviorally engaged students. We want to strive for emotionally and academically engaged students.

I encourage you to read this post from Angela Watson of *Truth for Teachers*, in which she discusses that apathy and the life skills students need to learn to battle it. Let's face it – even we don't feel like doing work some days!



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!



COUNSELING NEWS

HELPING YOU HELP YOUR CHILD FIND SUCCESS

MARCH 2024

REGISTRATION INFORMATION:

The counseling staff has concluded classroom visits and registration for current 9th - 11th graders! For current 8th graders, registration for their forms for freshman year are due March 1st.

If your student was absent and did not receive the registration materials or has not turned them in, please have them pick up the paperwork in the counseling center or turn it in ASAP. As a reminder, we require a parent signature before we register students for classes.

Have questions?

Contact the Counseling Center at
406-324-2220.

Congratulations to our Students of the Month!

MBI:

Trinity Love
Will Eaton
Lachlan Mullen
Jinyi Wu

IMPORTANT DATES & DEADLINES

April 9th, District ACT
(Juniors Only)

March 15: MUS Honors &
Stem scholarship
applications due
March 31: all MCF
scholarships are due today
March 25 - March 29: Spring
Break, no school

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.



Attention Seniors: Are you tracking scholarship deadlines?

Check out the calendar in the hallway by the Counseling Center to see the upcoming deadlines for local scholarships! March and April are HUGE months for scholarship deadlines, so don't wait to get your materials organized and your applications submitted.

Montana Community Foundation Scholarships:

ALL applications are due March 31st!

MCF is great site to use to apply to local scholarships -- just fill out the application profile once, and you can apply to multiple scholarships at the same time. Learn more at mtcf.org/scholarships/apply-for-a-scholarship

Reach Higher Montana Scholarships

Reach Higher offers many scholarships for Montana students, including opportunities for students going to trade schools and apprentice programs. See what they have at reachhighermontana.org/plan-your-future/scholarships/montana-scholarships

MUS Honor Scholarship

The Montana University System has an excellent scholarship for students planning to attend college at an eligible MT campus. This is a 4-year renewable scholarship that waives the recipients tuition. Please note that a 7th semester transcript is a required part of the application and you must have a cumulative GPA of at least a 3.4.

DEADLINE: March 15, 2024

LEARN MORE AND APPLY: bit.ly/mushonors



The HHS scholarship page includes many of the awards found on the Reach Higher and MCF sites. Be sure to check there for new opportunities:
bit.ly/scholarshipphs

We are getting closer to ACT time!

On Tuesday, April 9th all HHS Junior students will take the ACT at Helena High School.

ACT Preregistration

This month, students will pre-register for the ACT online during the school day. If your student misses this opportunity during the school day, they can complete it at home on their own and they can obtain directions for this at their school. Students will simply be able to make an ACT account, log in, and answer basic questions about their academics and where they would like (free) test scores sent. It is the expectation that each student completes this pre-registration process prior to April 9th.

ACT Preparation

The Prep Booklet online – Your student can print this off and use it to help prepare.

The Information for Examinees website has an online practice test.

This pamphlet tells students to access this site for My ACT Academy.

Additional resources for ACT test prep can be found on the below sites:

www.kaptest.com/act/free/act-free-practice-test

www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/the-act/test-preparation/free-act-test-prep.html

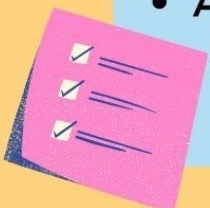
The Day of the Test:

What to Bring:

- Photo ID
- #2 Pencil
- ACT approved calculator

What Not to Bring:

- Cell phones or any electronic device
- Smart watch/Fitbit
- Backpacks
- Food/Drink



For over 70 years this program has taken the best of Montana's youth and strengthened their leadership foundations. It has taught them important lessons in leadership, citizenship, sportsmanship and helped to forge them into truly effective future leaders of Montana and the nation. This experience is also a wonderful addition to your college/scholarship applications and resumes.

GIRLS STATE & BOYS STATE

Girls State: June 16 - 22, 2024

Boys State: June 16 - 22, 2024

Girls State applications are due by
May 30.

Learn more and apply online:

bit.ly/girlsstate2024
bit.ly/boysstate2024

Looking
for a
summer
job?



**SUMMER JOBS
PROGRAM**

A VENTURE OF AJAY MT



Check out the Helena Area Summer Jobs Program!

HSJP students are matched with a paid summer job or paid internship, complete a work skills training, and meet with an adult mentor, focusing on work-based learning.

Summer Jobs Program students get FREE tuition to the 3-credit COMX-115 summer course at Helena College!

HSJP employers pay a minimum of \$10/hour. Part-time and full-time positions are available.

BREAKING DOWN YOUR AWARD LETTER

This sample award letter was created to help you make sense of the information you've been sent.

Sample Award Letter

Financial Aid		\$39,945		
A	GRANTS AND SCHOLARSHIPS			
		Fall	Spring	Total
	Faculty Scholarship	\$15,500	\$15,500	\$31,000
	Federal Pell Grant	\$1,323	\$1,322	\$2,645
	Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (FSEOG)	\$400	\$400	\$800
B	LOANS			
	Federal Direct Subsidized Loan	\$1,750	\$1,750	\$3,500
	Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$2,000

Estimated Cost of Attendance		\$61,826		
DIRECT BILLABLE COSTS	Fall	Spring	Total	
	Tuition	\$23,085	\$23,085	\$46,170
	Fees	\$180	\$180	\$360
	Room/Housing	\$4,010	\$4,010	\$8,020
	Meals/M meal Plan	\$2,688	\$2,688	\$5,376
INDIRECT COSTS				
	Book/Supplies	\$550	\$550	\$1,100
	Transportation	\$225	\$225	\$450
	Other Educational Costs	\$175	\$175	\$350

Total Estimated Balance		\$21,881	
ESTIMATED MONTHLY PAYMENT OPTIONS			
\$2,188		\$1,823	
10 payments per year		12 payments per year	
		DEPOSIT NOW	
		METHODS OF PAYMENT	

Resources to Pay Your Balance

F ACCEPTING YOUR FINANCIAL AID AWARD
Log into our website and accept, decline or partially accept your financial aid award.

G	WORK STUDY			
	Federal Work Study	Fall	Spring	Total
		\$1,250	\$1,250	\$2,500

PAYMENT PLAN
We offer 10 and 12 month payment plans. Payment plans are calculated by semester and subject to change. You need to sign up for a payment plan each semester.

If you have any questions or concerns related to this award letter, please contact the financial aid office.

Keep in mind, your award letter will likely look different as schools do not have to follow a standard template.

A SCHOLARSHIPS

- Scholarships are free money, meaning you don't have to pay anything back.
- Each scholarship will have its own name.
- Find out if the scholarship is renewable for all four years and be sure you understand the criteria to maintain the scholarship, like if there is a GPA minimum.

B FEDERAL PELL GRANTS

- Federal grants are free money from the government.
- The Pell Grant is designed to help students who display exceptional financial need.

C FEDERAL LOANS

- Federal loans are money the government offers you on loan, meaning you have to pay the money back with interest.
- SUBSIDIZED LOANS** are based on financial need. You need to repay these loans, but the government pays the interest while you're in school at least half-time and for up to six months after you graduate.
- UNSUBSIDIZED LOANS** aren't based on need and you will have to pay back the loan with any interest that accrues while you're in school and during your grace and repayment periods.
- The loan amounts you see offered in your award letter may be more than what you need. You don't have to accept all the money available to you.

D COSTS

- DIRECT BILLABLE COSTS** are costs that need to be paid directly to the school.
- INDIRECT COSTS** cover expenses like books, supplies, and transportation. These are costs related to attending school but aren't paid directly to the school.

E TOTAL ESTIMATED BALANCE

- This is the school's estimate of what you'll pay annually.
- Keep in mind this number doesn't account for additional student loans you may take out, other scholarships you could earn or savings you or your family have. It also may not include all expenses associated with attending school.
- The school is offering a payment plan. Call the school to find out if there are any fees or interest charges associated with the payment plan offered.

F ACCEPTING YOUR FINANCIAL AID AWARD

- You're not required to accept all of the funds offered in your award letter. You can accept the scholarships and grants, even if you don't accept the loans.
- You're not locked in to attending the school until you send your enrollment deposit.

G WORK-STUDY

- Work-study is a federal program that allows you to earn money while in college.
- This money is not directly applied to tuition. You receive it in the form of a paycheck like any other job.
- Work-study jobs are not guaranteed to every eligible student. You have to apply and be hired for these positions.
- The amount listed isn't guaranteed either. That number represents the maximum amount you'll be able to receive through work-study.



Forest Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Helena-Lewis and Clark
NATIONAL FOREST

MARCH 7 + 8

WILDLAND FIRE

RECRUITMENT EVENT

AT ALL OFFICES



GS-3/4 POSITIONS
IN MULTIPLE LOCATIONS!



APPLY ONLINE!

APPLICATIONS ACCEPTED
MARCH 4TH - 15TH



SCAN THE QR CODE OR VISIT
RB.GY/RA7757

MEDSTART CAMP

**CURRENT FRESHMEN, SOPHOMORES
& JUNIORS! JUMPSTART YOUR
HEALTHCARE JOURNEY TODAY!**

Job Shadow Interested
Professionals, Get Hands-On
Experience, Earn College
Credit and MORE!

Click link below to access application

2024 MedStart **Application**

CAMP DATES

- Missoula - June 17-21
- Butte - June 23-27
- Great Falls - July 7-11
- Miles City - July 14-18
- Billings - July 21-25

For more information:

Katie Glueckert Sarah Matter
katie.glueckert@mtha.org sarah.matter@mtha.org



Shoutout to Carroll Football Team!

The PBS (Positive Behavioral Support) special education classroom at Helena High School has had some welcome help recently. For the last four Fridays, members of the Carroll College football team have volunteered time to play board games with students in Teal Hatten and Michelle Brown's Social Skills class. Players initially visited with Defensive Line Coach, Gabe Brown, but have continued to volunteer their time without being asked. Hatten and Brown have been instructing the young men in their class on communication skills, turn taking, frustration tolerance, stress management, following social expectations, etc. Teacher Michelle Brown said that students really look forward to the football players visiting. She said, "I can't express enough gratitude for these guys. Having a chance to practice authentic, real-life social skills is invaluable to these students. I know the players are busy, and we are so impressed that they take the time to give back to our school. It says a LOT about their character as young men." Hatten and Brown would like to sincerely thank players: Jaxson Washington, Hunter Gum, Danny Garcia, Braedon York, Beau Meyer, Cam Burnham, Derrick Saltzman, Matt Lee and Wyatt Sanford. They would also like to thank Coach Brown and Coach Purcell for supporting this valuable partnership.

Respiratory Virus Guidance Snapshot

Core prevention strategies

Immunizations	Hygiene	Steps for Cleaner Air	Treatment	Stay Home and Prevent Spread*

Additional prevention strategies

Masks	Distancing	Tests

Layering prevention strategies can be especially helpful when:

- ✓ Respiratory viruses are causing a lot of illness in your community
- ✓ You or those around you have risk factors for severe illness
- ✓ You or those around you were recently exposed, are sick, or are recovering

***Stay home and away from others until, for 24 hours BOTH:**

Your symptoms are getting better

+

You are fever-free (without meds)

⚠️ Then take added precaution for the next 5 days



March is National Nutrition Month. Celebrate by clicking [here](#) for ideas on maintaining a healthy eating pattern throughout high school and much more! The teenage years are marked by rapid body and brain growth (again!) and is an important time to create and maintain a healthy relationship with food. Disordered eating includes unhealthy choices around food and body behaviors and is unfortunately common. Examples of disordered eating include:

- Skipping meals – Cleanses – Heightened Focus on Appearance – Fad Diets – Supplement Misuse – Diet Pills – Undereating – Overeating – Extreme Social Media Focus on Appearance or Food – Using Exercise, Food Restriction, Fasting or Purging to “make up for bad food consumed” –

If this is a concern in your household, then please reach out to me to discuss resources.

Also, Click [here](#) for 20 Money Saving Tips for budget conscious meal planning.





THURSDAY, APRIL 18, 2024 AT 6:00 PM MDT

Ben Cort- The Truth about THC

1025 N. Rodney, Helena, MT, United States, Montana 59601

Join us for an enlightening evening as we delve into the realities of THC with renowned prevention advocate, Ben Cort! You may recognize Ben from his impactful TEDx talks, and now he's bringing his insights to Helena.

In this thought-provoking session, Ben Cort will shed light on the dangers that marijuana can pose, particularly in our communities, schools, and households. This event is a must attend for anyone concerned about the impact of marijuana.

This rare opportunity will be held at the HMS Auditorium, April 18th at 6pm. Don't miss out on deepening our understanding and work towards a safer, healthier future for our community!

Event Sponsored by Youth Connections

How to Keep Our Kids Safe



Ben Cort, author of *Weed, Inc.* and national speaker will discuss with parents, teachers, administrators, and policy makers steps to take to keep communities safe

This is a must-see presentation!

FREE



AFTER SCHOOL @ EXWORKS

Registration Now Open!

Classes begin the week of April 2nd

Member Cost: \$65 / Non-Member Cost: \$75

Scholarships available!

Tuesdays | 3:45 - 5:15

Potions (Ages: 7-9)

Beginner LEGO Robotics Club (Ages: 7-9)

Wednesdays | 3:45 - 5:15

Advanced LEGO Robotics (Ages: 9+)

Junior Chefs (Ages: 7-9) (additional \$25 fee)

Thursdays | 3:45 - 5:15

SciGirls, Jr. (Ages: 7-9)

Tech Masters (Ages: 10+)

Scan the QR code for full descriptions and
registration information:



ExplorationWorks!

Spring Break Workshops

March 25-29

ExplorationWorks is offering half-day Spring Break workshops for kids ages 6-9. All-day options are available with a supervised lunch break (lunch not provided). Scholarships available!

To view the lineup and to register, visit ExplorationWorks.org/Workshops or scan the QR code:

