



EAST HELENA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

School District No. 9

P.O. Box 1280 * East Helena, MT. 59635

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Eastgate Elementary School (406) 227-7770 * Prickly Pear Elementary (406) 227-7720

Radley Elementary School (406) 227-7710 * East Valley Middle School (406) 227-7740

"Success For All"

September 14, 2018

Dear Students, Parents and Community Members,

Here is the current planning and thinking of the East Helena School District regarding how the new East Helena High School will roll out. During the construction update meeting last night we found out that more information is desperately needed about the planning, curriculum and athletic offerings for the new high school. Students are rightfully nervous about the big decision that they have to make between staying in East Helena to go to high school or to go on to the already familiar programming that Helena has to offer. So this document is a first attempt to outline the programs and the process to help alleviate some of those fears... and more importantly to share what we know so far.

There are three fundamental decisions that are scheduled to occur:

1. Students will be enrolled in the new East Helena High School (EHHS) and start to attend EHHS on Wednesday, August 28, 2019.
2. Students will attend their new high school during the 2019 - 2020 school year starting August 28th 2019 at the East Valley Middle School Campus,
3. Students will start as freshmen and Sophomores to attend the newly constructed EHHS on August 26th, 2020.

Unfortunately delays have caused us to hesitate on announcing these dates, but today we are confident that this will be the schedule.

The new high school will be a comprehensive high school, meaning this school will offer a complete high school experience for students. There will be student government and officers, there will be highly rigorous and high quality required classes dictated by the state accreditation standards... i.e. math, science, English and social studies just like every high school in Montana... only better because it's your own East Helena brand of education.

The East Helena High School will also offer a wide range of elective classes at the appropriate levels throughout the 4 year high school. The new building is designed with many options in mind for business classes, art classes, computer graphic design, culinary arts, carpentry/woodworking, welding, etc., etc. to name a few. It is important to know that though this is very early in the planning process and many many meetings must determine the exact details, the full 4 year high school experience should be rolled out by February, in time for EHHS high school registration to start for the freshman class of 2019 - 2020. That even includes the minimum requirements for students that aspire to be the first valedictorians or salutatorians of the 2023 Graduating Class of East Helena High School (So, then we ARE using this platform for recognition?).

The School District plans to also start hiring coaches and sponsors for the high school extra-curricular offerings as early as this November... 2018. The district has made a commitment to offer a wide range of extracurricular activities including obvious MHSA sanctioned sports like volleyball, football, basketball, track, cross country, and depending on the ability to field a complete team of athletes other sports like softball, tennis, golf and others. Also the District plans to immediately build the fundamental government and clubs that make for a complete well rounded high school. Student Council will be an absolute must for the first freshmen. Also other important clubs like National Honor Society, DECA, FFA, Rodeo Club, etc. etc. will be offered as interest of students warrant. Staff and community members will be working hard planning and taking input from students and parents who will be paramount in planning for the many unknowns that still lie ahead.

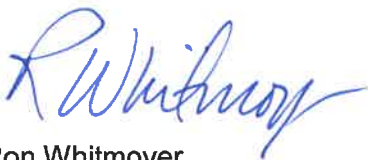
In all School District efforts you will always see that the decisions are based on what's best for our kids. So have confidence that as we work with committees throughout the coming 6 months of very intense planning that we will do our best to communicate to students, parents and the community about not only the construction schedule and planning, but probably more importantly, the inside workings of this great new high school.

Please take the time to watch for upcoming meetings and chances to give input via surveys and questionnaires as well. And know that the District is working on a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) document that will be forthcoming in the next week.

We are East Helena! Loud and proud of our schools and the students that make them great!

Feel free to reach out to your school administrators by calling Jill Miller, Principal at Eastgate School 227-7770, Jill Miller, Principal at Prickly Pear Elementary School 227-7720, Joe McMahon, Principal at Radley Elementary School 227-7710, Dan Rispens, Principal at East Valley Middle School 227-7740, Kevin VanNice, Vice Principal at East Valley Middle School 227-7740 or Ron Whitmoyer, Superintendent of East Helena Schools at 227-7700 if you have questions.

Sincerely,



Ron Whitmoyer
Superintendent