



**PLAINS
PUBLIC
SCHOOLS**

SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 1

P.O. Box 549
412 Rittenour
Plains, MT 59859
(406) 826-8600
Fax (406) 826-4439

March 17, 2026

Lisa Burhnam
Hand-Delivered

Re: Recommendation for Termination

Dear Ms. Burnham,

This letter is to notify you that the Board of Trustees has received a recommendation from Superintendent Kathy Walsh that you be terminated from your position as a Speech and Language Pathologist with the Plains School District pursuant to Section 20-4-204, MCA, a copy of which is enclosed for your records. The purpose of this letter is to provide you notice of that recommendation and with notice of your right to a hearing regarding the Superintendent's recommendation.

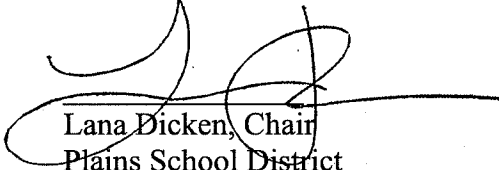
Enclosed for your information is a copy of Superintendent Walsh's letter to me dated March 16, 2026, which provides the specific reasons leading to her recommendation for your termination.

You have the right to a hearing before the Board of Trustees concerning Superintendent Walsh's recommendation. Under Section 20-4-204, MCA, the hearing must be set not less than ten (10) days or more than twenty (20) days from the date of this letter. This hearing has been scheduled for Tuesday, March 31, at 8:00 p.m. in the Library.

You also have the right to waive the hearing; however, that waiver must be in writing. At the hearing, you will have the right to cross-examine any witnesses, present evidence and testimony on your own behalf and you also have the right to be represented by an attorney or other individual of your choosing. Following the presentation of the Superintendent's recommendation and your response to that recommendation, the Trustees will vote to either accept or reject the Superintendent's recommendation for your termination.

If you have any questions, please let me know

Sincerely,



Lana Dicken, Chair
Plains School District



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March 16, 2026.

Lana Dicken, Chair
Plains School District

Hand-Delivered

Re: Recommendation for Termination

Dear Mrs. Dicken,

I am recommending that the Trustees of the Plains School District terminate Lisa Burnham from her position as a Speech and Language Pathologist pursuant to Section 20-4-204, MCA. The purpose of this letter is to give notice to you, the other Trustees, and to Ms. Burnham.

This recommendation is made for the following reason:

The Board of Trustees voted to join the Cabinet Mountain Special Education Cooperative to provide comprehensive and consistent services to the students of the Plains School District. In doing so, it eliminated the need for Ms. Burnham's position. This is a reduction in force.

Under Section 20-4-204, MCA, you are required to notify Ms. Burnham of this recommendation and of her right to a hearing. The notification must be delivered by certified mail or by personal notification for which a signed receipt must be returned. You will then need to set a hearing date, not less than ten (10) and no more than twenty (20) days from your receipt of this notice of recommendation for termination. I have also provided Ms. Burnham with a copy of this letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kathleen Walsh". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Kathleen Walsh
Superintendent
Plains School District

20-4-204. Termination of tenure teacher services. (1) (a) The following persons may make a recommendation in writing to the trustees of the district for termination of the services of a tenure teacher:

(i) a district superintendent;

(ii) in a district without a district superintendent, a principal;

(iii) in a district without a district superintendent or a principal, the county superintendent or a trustee of the district.

(b) The recommendation must state clearly and explicitly the specific reason or reasons leading to the recommendation for termination.

(2) Whenever the trustees of a district receive a recommendation for termination, the trustees shall notify the teacher of the recommendation for termination and of the teacher's right to a hearing on the recommendation. The notification must be delivered by certified letter or by personal notification for which a signed receipt is returned. The notification must include:

(a) the statement of the reason or reasons that led to the recommendation for termination; and

(b) a printed copy of this section for the teacher's information.

(3) The teacher may, in writing, waive the right to a hearing. Unless the teacher waives the right to a hearing, the trustees shall set a hearing date, giving consideration to the convenience of the teacher, not less than 10 days or more than 20 days from receipt of the notice of recommendation for termination.

(4) The trustees shall:

(a) conduct the hearing on the recommendation at a regularly scheduled or special meeting of the board of trustees and in accordance with **2-3-203**; and

(b) resolve at the conclusion of the hearing to terminate the teacher or to reject the recommendation for termination.

(5) The tenure teacher may appeal a decision to terminate an employment contract to the county superintendent if the teacher's employment is not covered by a collective bargaining agreement pursuant to Title 39, chapter 31, who may appoint a qualified attorney as a legal adviser who shall assist the superintendent in preparing findings of fact and conclusions of law. If the employment of the teacher is covered by a collective bargaining agreement pursuant to Title 39, chapter 31, a tenure teacher shall appeal a decision to terminate an employment contract to an arbitrator agreed upon by the district and the teacher's exclusive representative. If the exclusive representative has declined to represent the teacher, the teacher or the district may request that the board of personnel appeals provide a list of arbitrators from which the teacher and the district shall, after the toss of a coin to determine the order of striking, alternately strike names from the list until one arbitrator is selected and appointed. By mutual agreement between the parties, the county superintendent of schools may be appointed as the arbitrator.

(6) In a termination involving a teacher whose employment is not covered by a collective bargaining agreement pursuant to Title 39, chapter 31, either the teacher or the trustees may appeal to the district court of the county in which the teacher was employed. The proceedings must be commenced no later than 60 days after the date of the decision of the county superintendent.

(7) In a termination involving a teacher whose employment is covered by a collective bargaining agreement pursuant to Title 39, chapter 31, a request for arbitration must be made within 20 days from the date of termination unless an alternative time period is provided by the terms of a collective bargaining agreement.

(8) The decision of the arbitrator is final and binding. Each party shall pay one-half of an arbitrator's charges unless a different cost allocation arrangement is agreed upon by the parties.

(9) An arbitrator may order a school district to reinstate a teacher who has been terminated without good cause and to provide compensation, with interest, to a teacher for lost wages and fringe benefits from the date of termination to the date that the teacher is offered reinstatement to the same or a comparable position. Interim earnings, including the amount that the teacher could have earned with reasonable diligence, must be deducted from the amount awarded for lost wages. Before interim earnings are deducted from lost wages, reasonable amounts spent by a teacher in searching for, obtaining, or relocating to new employment must be deducted from interim earnings.

(10) Except as provided in this section, an arbitrator may not order a school district to provide compensation for punitive damages, pain and suffering, emotional distress, compensatory damages, attorney fees, or any other form of damages.

(11) Upon submission of the termination decision to an arbitrator, the teacher or the teacher's exclusive representative may not file an action against the district for reinstatement or compensation of lost wages and fringe benefits.

(12) As used in this section, the following definitions apply:

(a) "Fringe benefits" means the value of any employer-paid vacation leave, sick leave, medical insurance plan, disability or life insurance plan, or pension benefit in effect on the date of termination.

(b) "Lost wages" means the gross amount of wages that would have been reported to the internal revenue service on form W-2 and includes any compensation deferred at the option of the employee.

History: En. 75-6104 by Sec. 85, Ch. 5, L. 1971; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 157, L. 1974; amd. Sec. 2, Ch. 306, L. 1974; R.C.M. 1947, 75-6104; amd. Sec. 2, Ch. 521, L. 1983; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 56, L. 1985; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 510, L. 1987; amd. Sec. 3, Ch. 438, L. 1997.

FTE to QEC Payment Summary

The list below is reflective of personnel entered in Infinite Campus with QEC eligible State Assignment code(s). The IC FTE is what has been entered in Infinite Campus. The QEC FTE compares the SEID to qualifications in TeachMT or Department of Labor and Industry (DLI).

If QEC FTE=0, check the SEID (Staff State ID), Credentials (DLI license number), or State Assignment Code (District Assignment) in Infinite Campus. Total FTE should not exceed 1.0, except when an employee's hours are greater than 40/week. State FTE includes FTE from other districts. If changes need to be made, those can be done within Infinite Campus and this report can be repulled for further review.

This data is preliminary data reflective of data as of yesterday. Changes will be allowed until 12/31. Changes after 12/31 will not be accepted. For Infinite Campus questions contact the EDUCATE team at (406)444-3800. For School Finance questions contact Alivia Skeslien-Jenkins (406)444-1964

Fiscal Year	PositionCode		#s	Last Name	First Name	
2026	AD31			Walsh	Kathleen	1
2026	AD34			Fettinger	Heidi	1
2026	AD34			Meredith	Kevin	1
						3
			25/26			
			14/25			
2026	TC01	Kindergarten and				
2026	TC01	Kindergarten		Rice	Jillian	1
2026	TC01	Grade 1	23	Greer	Michelle	1
2026	TC01	Grade 2	28	Leeper	Rhonda	1
2026	TC01	Grade 2		Gumm	Cindy	1
2026	TC01	Grade 3	32	Miller	Erin	1
2026	TC01	Grade 3		Waddle	Steven	1
2026	TC01	Grade 4	29	Wamer	Julie	1
2026	TC01	Grade 5	37	Meaden	Bethany	1
2026	TC01	Grade 5		Cole	Alec	1
2026	TC01	Grade 6	34	Winebrenner	Cristina	1
2026	TC01	Grade 6		Feist	Meg	1
		Grade		Jirasko	Sandra	1
				VACANCY		
2026	TC01	Science 7-8	37	Bebb	Max	1
2026	TC01	History 7-8	39	Errecart	Marie	1
2026	TC01	History 7-8		Nelson	Kenneth	1
2026	SP21	Math 7-8/Title/PreEts		VACANCY		
					Rehbein Lori	1
2026	TC01	Math 9-12		Brown	Lisa	1
2026	SP21/TC01	Math 9-12/Counselor		Klammer	Tanna	1
2026	TC01	English 9-12/PT		McComas	Alexis	0.71
2026	TC01	Science 9-12		Sanford	Brooks	1
2026	TC01	English 9-12		Tatum	Michael	1
2026	TC01	Art		Cole	Kristen	1
2026	TC01	PE		Cole	Madisen	1
		Music		VACANCY		
2026	TC01	Family Consumer		Jermyn	Charly	1
2026	TC01	Industrial Arts		Mitchell	Kyle	1
2026	TC01	Business/Voc Ed Business		Mitchell	Kati	1
2026	SP21	Counselor		Allen	Tyrel	1
2026	SP22/TC02	Library K-6/Title I		Meredith	Marlee	1
2026	SP22	Librarian/PT		Holland	Lacey	0.5
2026	SE40	Speech Language		VACANCY		
2026	TC01/02/03	Elem PE/Special Ed		Ferlan	Gena	1
2026	TC03	Special Ed Grades 7-12		Hagerman	Lara	1
2026	TC03	Special Ed Grade 5-8		Lakko	Kimberly	1
				CERT TEACHERS		32.21
				Vacancy		2
				Admin		3
				TOTAL		37.21

Class Size

25/26	26/27
14/25	
23	25
28	23
32	28
29	32
37	29
34	37