



Helena School Bond
HIGH SCHOOL & ELEMENTARY BOND 2025

TODAY'S VOTE. TODAY'S INVESTMENT. TOMORROW'S IMPACT.

ELECTION DAY: SEPTEMBER 9TH

The Time is Now.

Across our Helena Public Schools, our buildings are aging—the **average facility is over 70 years old**—and decades of **deferred maintenance** have taken a toll. Failing systems, outdated learning environments: if our buildings could speak, they'd be telling us that they can't keep up with the needs of our students. Over the years, there hasn't been significant bond investment, and now construction costs continue to rise—meaning the longer we wait, the more expensive it gets to fix what's broken and build what's needed.

A recent Facilities Master Plan, built on months of study and public input, identified the most urgent projects.

These include:

- A **new Helena High School** to replace the deteriorating facility.
- Significant renovations to **Capital High School** to address critical infrastructure needs.
- A **new Kessler Elementary School** to replace an outdated, undersized building.

- **Athletics investments** for a new competition field and HHS/CHS Practice Facilities.
- A **new location for the District Kitchen**, which currently operates out of a space never meant for food service.
- A **new facility for the Project for Alternative Learning (PAL)**, providing better support for students who need it most.

To make this happen, we're asking voters to consider two bond measures:

- **\$240 million for the High School District**
- **\$43 million for the Elementary District**

These are strategic, future-focused investments in safe, healthy, and functional learning environments—not just for today's students, but for generations to come.

THE ELECTION IS SEPTEMBER 9. This is our moment to act—before costs rise further, and while we can still choose to build a stronger future for Helena.

If Our Buildings Could Speak

The 2025 High School Bond Project for Alternative Learning: Expanding Opportunity, Preserving Identity

Since 1989, Project for Alternative Learning (PAL) has supported students who thrive outside the traditional high school model, offering a safe, inclusive space built on respect, belonging, and individualized learning. But as demand grows, PAL's outdated facility limits its ability to serve students effectively.

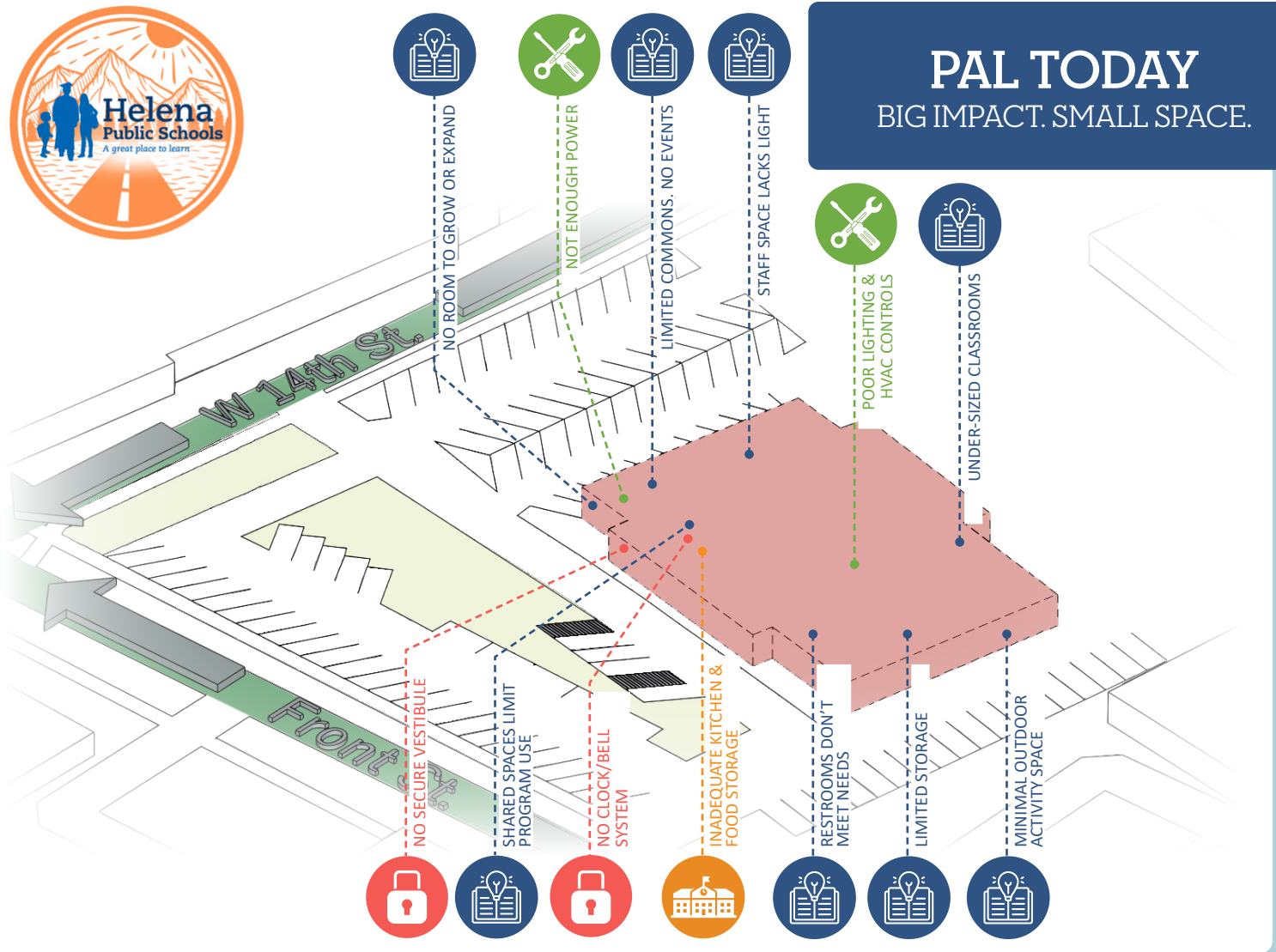
The 2025 High School Bond would relocate PAL to a new space on the Helena High School campus—preserving its identity while providing improved classrooms, accessibility, and access to shared resources. PAL will remain its own school, now better equipped to help every student succeed.





PAL TODAY

BIG IMPACT. SMALL SPACE.



What are the current issues at PAL?



LIMITED SAFETY AND SECURITY FEATURES

The PAL building lacks key safety elements, including a functioning clock and bell system—important for structured transitions and routine. The absence of a secure gym or dedicated wellness space limits supervision during physical activity, and shared building use adds strain to daily operations.



BARRIERS TO PRIVACY AND INCLUSION

While mostly navigable, the building's restrooms do not meet the needs of PAL's transgender and gender-nonconforming students, creating privacy and equity issues. The outdoor area also lacks accessible play or fitness equipment.



SPACES DON'T SUPPORT MODERN LEARNING

PAL classrooms are undersized and inflexible, with no dedicated science lab, shop, or culinary space—limiting hands-on, career-connected learning. A small commons serves multiple functions but is too limited, and space constraints prevent the program from serving freshmen despite high demand.



CRAMPED MULTI-USE LAYOUT

The kitchen is small and poorly equipped, with just two ovens, limited prep space, and little storage. Staff offices are crowded or windowless, including the counselor's office and art classroom. The commons serves as a gym, cafeteria, and meeting space, causing daily scheduling conflicts.



BASIC SYSTEMS FALL SHORT

PAL lacks a bell/clock system, and many rooms have poor lighting, HVAC, and limited power access. Classrooms and labs lack the outlets and data ports needed for modern instruction. The building's systems weren't designed for this type of program and are strained by shared use with other departments.



NO SPACE FOR COMMUNITY OR GROWTH

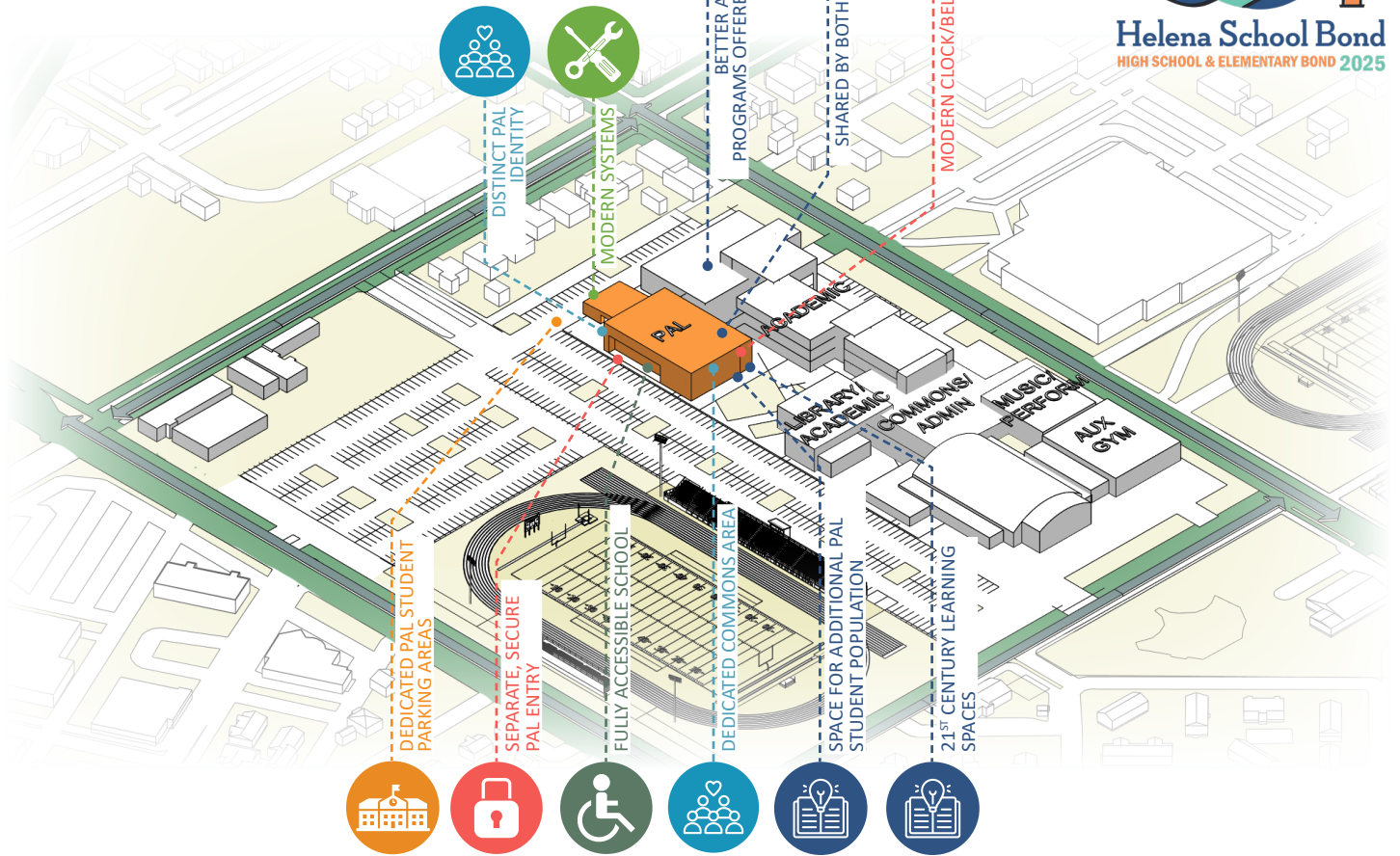
PAL cannot host community events or family gatherings due to a limited commons and lack of overflow space. Shared use by other district programs strains the building further, leaving little room to grow or serve all grade levels.

PAL ELEVATED

RIGHT SPACE. RIGHT SUPPORT.
REAL IMPACT.



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What will an investment in PAL look like?



SAFER, MORE SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT

The new PAL facility will include **core safety features** such as a **clock and bell system** to support **daily transitions** and necessary notifications. A thoughtful building layout will **improve supervision and circulation**, providing a **calm, organized setting** that supports learning and student well-being.



INCLUSIVE & ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL

The new building will meet **ADA accessibility requirements** and provide **adequate, private restrooms** to **accommodate all students with dignity**. Thoughtfully designed **indoor and outdoor spaces** will ensure that all learners can move **comfortably and participate fully** in school activities.



BUILT FOR ALTERNATIVE LEARNING SUCCESS

The updated facility will feature **right-sized classrooms** for PAL's **small-group model**, along with spaces like a **science lab and culinary or shop area** to **support hands-on learning**. A better layout will also allow PAL to **serve more students, including freshmen**.



MODERN, MULTI-PURPOSE SPACES

The new facility will **replace PAL's undersized, multi-use spaces** with **purpose-built classrooms and support areas**. A **right-sized commons** and simple kitchen will **improve daily operations**, with a **design that matches the quality of other high school improvements**.



EFFICIENT, MODERN BUILDING SYSTEMS

The facility will feature **updated HVAC, lighting, and electrical systems** for a **comfortable, energy-efficient environment**. Classrooms will include essential infrastructure to **support technology and instruction**, aligned with other school improvements.



CONNECTED TO CAMPUS

The new PAL facility will be located on the Helena High campus, giving students **access to shared resources like CTE, athletics, and support services** without duplicating costly infrastructure. It **preserves PAL's identity while fostering stronger ties to the broader community**.

HOW WILL THIS BOND AFFECT MY PROPERTY TAXES?

Helena voters will be asked to consider two separate bond measures in 2025:

\$43 MILLION ELEMENTARY BOND (20-YEAR TERM)

The Elementary Bond will appear on tax rolls starting in the 2026–27 fiscal year. To help reduce the early impact on taxpayers, the bond is structured to levy fewer mills until two existing school bonds are paid off in 2037 and 2039—balancing near-term affordability with long-term investment in Helena’s aging elementary facilities.

\$240 MILLION HIGH SCHOOL BOND (30-YEAR TERM)

The High School Bond, also appearing on tax rolls in 2026–27, funds critical safety upgrades, new construction, renovations, and facility modernization at Helena’s two high schools.

The chart below shows **estimated tax increases** based on your home’s market and taxable value. These examples reflect homestead-qualified residential properties (primary homes or long-term rentals).

	ELEMENTARY BOND		HIGH SCHOOL BOND	
	20-Year Term		30-Year Term	
	\$43M		\$240M	
	ANNUAL (ESTIMATED)	MONTHLY (ESTIMATED)	ANNUAL (ESTIMATED)	MONTHLY (ESTIMATED)
2024/25 MARKET MULTIPLIER				
\$100,000	\$13.15	\$1.10	\$73.45	\$6.12
\$200,000	\$26.30	\$2.19	\$146.9	\$12.24
\$300,000	\$39.46	\$3.29	\$220.35	\$18.36
\$400,000	\$52.61	\$4.38	\$293.81	\$24.48
\$500,000	\$71.66	\$5.97	\$400.12	\$33.34

New in 2025: Montana’s tax laws are changing. Your home’s taxable value will now be based on its market value range:

- Up to \$400,000 – taxed at 0.76%
- \$400,001 to \$1.5 million – taxed at 1.10%
- Over \$1.5 million – taxed at 2.20%
- Non-primary homes and some agricultural properties will be taxed at different rates.

ALL BALLOTS MAILED ON AUG 22
ELECTION DAY: SEPT 9

UPCOMING EVENTS | BROWN BAGS & BONDS

- Tuesday, July 15 | 12-1 pm @ Capital High School
- Tuesday, July 22 | 12-1pm @ Helena High School
- Tuesday, July 29 | 12-1 pm @ Kessler Elementary School
- Tuesday, August 5 | 12-1 pm @ Capital High School
- Tuesday, August 12 | 12-1 pm @ Helena High School

CHECK BACK WITH THE HELENA
SCHOOL DISTRICT FOR MORE
BOND EDUCATION EVENTS AND
TOURS THROUGH THE SUMMER.

QUESTIONS? WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Check out the website for more information on the high school and elementary bonds, tax increase, images and more.

Check helenaschoolbond.org
for more information!

