

VARIANCES TO STANDARDS APPLICATION

Initial Application (two years)

Purpose: [ARM 10.55.604\(1\)](#) "A local board of trustees may apply to the Board of Public Education through the Superintendent of Public Instruction to implement a variance to a standard or a section of standards, excluding standards stating statutory criteria, standards pertaining to educator licensure or endorsement, and content standards as defined by the Board of Public Education and provided in guidance from the Superintendent of Public Instruction."

DUE DATES (check one)

- First semester implementation; first Monday in March
 Second semester implementation; first Monday in July
-

COUNTY:

Big Horn

DISTRICT:

Hardin
17H & 1

LIST EACH SCHOOL THAT IS REQUESTING THE VARIANCE:

Hardin High School

1. **Standard(s) for which a variance is requested, e.g., 10.55.709. If there is a program delivery standard, be sure to list it as well, e.g., 10.55.1801.**

The variance is being requested for 10.55.709 Library Media Services, K-12. The library shall be housed in a central location, and each school shall have a full-time or part-time licensed school library media specialist with a K-12 library media endorsement at the following ration: (c) 1.5 FTE for schools with 501- 1000 students.

At Hardin High School, we serve 489 students in grades 9 -12 (2017-2018 school year. We currently have 1 FTE certified librarian at the high school. The variance requested is outlined as follows:

*Hardin High School projected enrollment for the 2018-2019 school year is 547 students in grades 9-12. This projected student population requires 1.5 FTE Library Media Specialist. With this student population we will not meet the accreditation standard requirement.

2. **Provide evidence that local community stakeholders were involved in the consideration and development of the proposed variance. Community stakeholder groups include parents, community members, and students as applicable.**

The proposed Variance to Standards Application was introduced to Parents at the Hardin High School Parent/Teacher Conferences on Monday & Tuesday, February 19th & 20th 2018. The variance request was explained to the parents and those participating were in agreement with the proposed request. This information was also presented to the Hardin High School Student Council on Wednesday, February 21st. The proposed Variance to Standards was again presented to the Elsie Arntzen, Superintendent • Montana Office of Public Instruction

HHS Student Council at their regular meeting on Wednesday, February 28th. After some short discussion it was moved to approve the application process. The motion to support the school's request to apply for an accreditation waiver for the HHS Library was approved by the student council on a unanimous vote.

3. Provide evidence that local school stakeholders were involved in the consideration and development of the proposed variance. School stakeholder groups include trustees, administrators, teachers and classified school staff.

The proposed variance to standards request was presented to the Hardin School Districts 17H & 1 at their regular board meeting on Tuesday, February 13th 2018. The proposed variance to standards was presented and approved by the school board; the board minutes will be provided with this application. The current high school librarian has met and discussed this proposal with the high school administration team. The Building Leadership Team met on Tuesday, February 27th and discussed/reviewed the application for the Variance to Standards. The leadership team voted unanimously to approve the request. The current librarian has been involved and kept up to date with the application process. We again met with the Vice-Chair of the Hardin Board of Trustees to update him on the application's progress. He again agreed that this is what we needed to do at this point in time.

4. Attach Board of Trustee meeting minutes that show the Board of Trustees adopted the application for a variance at an official, properly noticed meeting.

See attached meeting notes

5. Describe the variance requested.

The enrollment numbers at Hardin High School fluctuate greatly during the beginning of each school year. Typically initial enrollment numbers drop by 15-20 students at the beginning of the fall semester. During our fall enrollment for the 2017-2018 school years we were at 515 students enrolled. This number indicated an OPI accreditation requirement for an additional ½ time Librarian/Media Specialist. By not having this position filled, we received an accreditation "accreditation deviation" for this year's report. In projecting forward for the next couple of years, it appears that our student numbers will continue to fluctuate between 500 and 550.

The Hardin High School Library provides exceptional library services to our students and staff. Our library was recently awarded a grant from the Laura Bush Foundation, which allowed our library to update and increase our Native American Library collection. Our library also provides two well-equipped Apple Computer Labs for the use of our classroom teachers. Our current librarian/media specialist provides exceptional library services throughout the day with the use of students serving as teacher assistants for each class period. This allows the librarian the ability to provide classroom assistance with research skills in the classroom and library as needed. This allows the library to provide great services throughout the academic day.

Operating in a rural community can make it difficult to hire a ½ time instructor/librarian without the option of providing them an additional teaching assignment based on his/her certification. To remain our accreditation status with the Office of Public Instruction, we will continue with the service of 1 FTE Librarian/Media Specialist at the high school as required for our current enrollment numbers. We would like to continue to provide exceptional library services through the use of a ½ time para-educator, and student teacher assistants in the library. This variance will allow us to work through a couple of years of fluctuating student numbers and still provide exceptional library services. In selecting a para-educator for the library position, we plan to look first at our current group of para-educators. A few of them have helped out in the library and/or our English classrooms and are familiar with the library services available and the demands on the library/media specialist that are generated by our instructional staff. Our para-educators meet the OPI educational/training requirements for para-educators as set in the quality standards by OPI

and have district certification to work in their respective roles. This experience and the familiarity with our students and demographics will ensure that we place the right individual in this para-educator position in the library.

6. Provide a statement of the mission and goals of this proposed variance.



Hardin High School Mission Statement: To provide values, knowledge, and skills to succeed in a changing society.

Our overall objective with this variance to standard request is to continue to compliment our core classroom instruction with library, leveled resources and instruction, media arts, and technology that meet the needs of our students.

The goal of this objective is to continue to provide the best quality education and library services possible for our students. It can prove difficult to hire a ½ time librarian to meet the state standard without the option or ability to offer additional teaching assignments to the individual if he/she is certified in other areas. We feel that we can continue to meet our school mission and goals with our full-time librarian, student library assistants, and the addition of a ½ paraprofessional for our library.

7. List specific measurable objectives that demonstrate the proposed variance will meet or exceed the results under the current standard(s).

The measurable objective that demonstrates that the proposed variance will meet or exceed the results under the current standards.

We will increase the use of the library media center by 15%. We will measure this by how many visitors come to the library. We will also measure this by monitoring and evaluating the amount of materials that are checked out.

Our current librarian will continue her work in collaborating with our classroom teachers and providing lessons as required to ensure that we meet the Library/Media Information standards as set forth in the Montana Content Standards.

Our librarian will continue to document lessons presented to students both in the library and the classroom. A collection and log of lessons presented will be maintained in the event that further documentation is required. This should include cross level lesson planning with classroom instructors.

We will increase the overall perception of the library by 20%. A survey will be conducted at the beginning of the school year of the students and also at the end of the year to determine student perception of the library. This will allow us to ensure that our librarian, with the assistance of student library assistants, and a para-educator, is being used in the most effective efficient manner and is able to service all the students and teachers that visit.

Research skills are taught to all students. We will ensure that all of our students receive an introduction to our library services through an orientation session. This will be scheduled by the English teachers working in conjunction with the librarian at the beginning of the school year. The librarian will collaborate with classroom teachers to ensure that all students are provided with the information necessary to successfully conduct research activities and complete research projects utilizing the library and computer lab facilities.

Our librarian will continue to promote and explore ways to increase reading appreciation. Our library currently use the Accelerated Reading Program for identifying book Lexile range. This ensures that our students are reading at an appropriate reading level for developing their reading/literacy skills. We also utilize the STAR Reading program to assist students with their reading skills. Both of these programs can be monitored with system progress reports available to both students and staff.

8. What data or evidence will be gathered to document progress toward meeting the measurable objectives?

The Library Visitor Log will track student and classroom numbers to determine if library use is increasing as we encourage more student appreciation for reading.

Book check-outs will be tracked on a quarterly basis to determine if library usage for reading appreciation has increased.

A report documenting classroom usage of the library and research center through the use of calendars, along with the logging of direct classroom instruction by the librarian.

9. In what way does this variance meet the specific needs of the students in the school(s)?

The Hardin High School Library will continue to operate in an effective efficient manner. With the continued use of Student Library Assistants and the added para-professional, our library will continue to provide the facilities, skills, and resources necessary to support our students whether for recreational reading, or research activities/projects as required by their classes. Our library will continue to maintain a leveled library reading collection, research center, and student computer labs to provide for all of our students and staff. This variance will allow us to continue these services without the concern of not meeting the accreditation standards as set by the Office of Public Instruction.

10. Describe how and why the proposed variance would be:

a. Workable. We currently have sufficient district and school resources available to continue to maintain an efficient well-equipped library facility. We currently have one full-time librarian for grades 9-12. We currently utilize Student Library Assistants for each class-period. We plan to provide a ½ time para-educator to assist the librarian to meet the needs of additional student numbers.

b. Educationally sound. Reading is designated as one of our school's literacy goals. We have worked hard over the past several years to put programs and assessments in place to monitor student reading growth and skills progress. These include: STAR Reading, Accelerated Reading, ISIP, designated reading time, and MAP assessments/monitoring. Research supports that reading is the foundational skill for all other learning. Continuing to provide student access to library services and promote reading in our high school is essential to our Continuous School Improvement Process.

c. Where applicable, aligned with program standards under ARM 10.55.1101 through 10.55.2101.

This variance will allow our school to continue to meet the library standards set forth in 10.55.1801. Working as a team our librarian, teachers, technology instructors, a ½ time para-educator, and student library assistants, will be able to continue to provide efficient effective library services to our students and classrooms.

Elsie Arntzen, Superintendent • Montana Office of Public Instruction

March 2017

d. Where applicable, aligned with content standards under ARM Chapters 53 and 54.

Our current library and media arts standards are aligned with the Montana Content Standards. Our Library/Media Specialist provides support to all classes in the implementation and enrichment of the Library/Media standards as set forth and required by the State of Montana. The Library/Media Specialist provides library services to all content areas as required to ensure that these standards are incorporated in all content areas.

REGULAR MEETING – February 13, 2018

The Board of Trustees of the County of Big Horn Big Horn Co School District 17H & 1 met in regular session at the District Administration Office, 401 Park Road, Hardin, Montana, on Tuesday, February 13, 2018.

With a quorum present, Chairman Marston called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

The following were present: Board Chair Jodeen Marston, Trustee Abby Moreland, Trustee Crystal Uffelman, Trustee Cori Watson, Vice Chair Jon Wells and District Clerk Kym Kern. Superintendent Dennis Gerke and Trustee Newton Old Crow, Jr., were absent.

Also in attendance were Laura Sundheim, Judy Arnold, Dawn Stewart, Teri Wagner, Rob Hankins, Amberly Howe, Kathi Kerr-Taylor, Kasey Koehler, Ken Koehler, Orlene Howe, and Sam Wilson.

Chairman Marston asked if there was any objection to approving the minutes of the January 23, 2018, regular meeting without being read. There being no objection the minutes were approved.

Claims were still being reviewed and would be presented later for approval.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Mr. Gerke was absent due to being sick and no report was presented.

STAFFING ISSUES

The following Retirement was submitted to the Board:

CERTIFIED

- Toni Guay, Librarian – Hardin Middle School

The 2017-2018 Substitute Roster dated 2/13/2018 was presented with two (2) new substitutes added, Stephanie Carleton and Summer Zier. Mrs. Watson made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Uffelman, to accept the retirement and approve the updated Substitute Roster as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Overtime for the pay period 1/14/18-1/27/18, and paid on 2/2/18, was presented to the Board for review. There were no questions regarding the overtime.

BUILDING ISSUES

Mr. Hankins spoke about the library staffing requirements based on student enrollment. The High School currently employs a 1 full-time equivalent (1 FTE) employee but since the enrollment numbers have exceeded 501 students, the state requires a 1.50 FTE for the library. Mr. Hankins explained the Variance to Standards application for the library, if approved, will meet the requirements for accreditation without having to hire an additional .50 FTE librarian. Mr. Wells made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Watson, to approve the Variance to Standards application for the High School Library. The motion passed unanimously.

A Trustee Resolution Calling for an Election by Mail Ballot was presented to the Board. The purpose of the election is to elect two (2) trustees for a three-year term and to seek approval of additional levies to operate and maintain the Hardin School Districts for the 2018-2019 school year if so determined. Mrs. Uffelman made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Moreland, to adopt the Resolution as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

The Board received the tally of staff votes for the 2018-2019 school calendar: Calendar A (BHEA), 131; Calendar B, 52; and Calendar C, 31. Discussion arose regarding the Feb. 25, 2019, PIR day and the decision was made to move it to Jan. 28, 2019, on Calendar A. Mrs. Moreland made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Watson, to adopt Calendar A for the 2018-2019 school year with the change to the PIR day as noted. The motion passed unanimously.

A list of credit cards and charge cards was presented to the Board for review according to Board Policy 7400. Mrs. Kern reviewed the list, with P-Cards being utilized for athletics, activities and District travel. The WEX cards are for fuel purchases for buses and District vehicles and offer more options in rural areas than the previous Mobile gas cards. The remainder of the cards consisted of four MasterCard, one Citicard and one Lowe's. The Board did not have any questions regarding the information presented.

Required school district signatures:

Board Chair Name: Jodeen Marston
Board Chair Signature: Jodeen Marston Date: 2/26/18
Superintendent Name: Dennis Gerke
Superintendent Signature: Dennis Gerke Date: 2/26/18

Mail the signed form to:

**Accreditation and Educator Preparation Division
Office of Public Instruction
PO Box 202501
Helena, MT 59620-2501**

OPI USE ONLY

Superintendent of Public Instruction: Elsie Arntzen Date 5/15/2018
 Approve Disapprove

Board of Public Education Chair Sharon Carroll Date 5/10/2018
 Approve Disapprove