

**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: Lake

DISTRICT: Polson School District #23

LIST EACH SCHOOL THAT IS REQUESTING THE VARIANCE: Polson Middle 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.**

10.55.709: Library Media Services - 1.5 FTE for schools with 501-1000 students

10.55.1801: Library Media Program Delivery Standards

- 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 sign in sheet for the February 10, 2020 meeting of the Polson School District Board of Trustees will be submitted after the meeting

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 sign-in sheet for the February 10, 2020 meeting of the Polson School District Board of Trustees will be submitted with this application. The agenda and draft minutes for the meeting, including approval of this application, are attached. The official minutes will follow upon approval of the Board.

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 Board of Trustee Meeting Minutes from February 10, 2020

5. Describe the variance requested.

We request approval of our initial application for an alternative standard regarding our library staffing. We would like to staff the Polson Middle School Library with 1 FTE certified teacher librarian and 1 FTE paraprofessional library assistant. This staffing arrangement allows us to offer flexible scheduling, expanded hours and services to students and staff, and library open during lunch recess for grades 5 - 8.

Polson Middle School has an enrollment ranging between 550 and 600 students through the school year. The current standard requires 1.5 FTE certified staff for a school with over 500 students. To follow this requirement the Polson Middle School Library would lose one highly qualified full-time paraprofessional staff member. This para-professional provides coverage and supervision of the library while the teacher librarian is administering the library, collaborating with staff, and teaching students in the library. The full-time paraprofessional is also able to complete many of the clerical and technical tasks needed during the workday. This position's replacement with half-time certified staff would limit the access to the library and the supervision of students during part of the school day. Services and support would be reduced.

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

Polson Middle School's mission is to be a safe, thriving, dynamic educational environment that teams with families and the community to inspire self-directed learners in an interconnected world.

The Polson Middle School Library is a curriculum-oriented facility which provides information and resources in a variety of formats and is committed to supporting all members of the school community. The library environment encourages student and staff productivity and collaboration, as well as recreational reading and relaxation.

The library is staffed by the teacher librarian and paraprofessional from 7:45 am until 4:00 pm each school day. The role of the library paraprofessional is to support the teacher librarian, staff and students. Working together, the teacher librarian and paraprofessional provide a strong library program that includes consistent hours of operation and flexible scheduling. This allows the teacher librarian to schedule twenty-six English Language Art classes, grades 5-8, for teaching/collaboration time weekly. This also allows for the teacher librarian to teach a reading and advisory class daily. All Polson Middle School staff are able to schedule classes for research in print and non-print resources, selection of books, computer-based testing, and group projects. Students are able to use the library before school, after school and during their lunch recess and other free time.

The presence of the full-time FTE para-professional provides skilled assistance to patrons and access to the library while the teacher librarian is collaborating with staff and teaching students. The teacher librarian is also supported in fulfilling the administrative duties of the library outlined in Standard 10.55.1801.

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

Polson Middle School Library fulfills the Library/Media Program Delivery Standards which include the essential functions of a teacher-librarian; information technology instruction, digital reading advocacy, and information management. The teacher librarian also performs in a leadership role as a teacher and program administrator.

Polson Middle School Library fulfills the Library/Media Program Standards which include the essential functions of a teacher-librarian; Information Technology Instruction, Reading Advocacy, and Information Management. Standard 4 of the Montana Standards for Information Literacy/Library Media addresses the students' ability to use information safely, ethically, and legally. Benchmarks at the end of 8th grade for Standard 4 include the ability to appropriately credit ideas and works of others and participate and collaborate in intellectual and social networks following safe and accepted practices. Standard 5 of the Montana Standards for Information Literacy/Library Media addresses the students' ability to pursue personal interests through literature and other creative expressions.

These skills are taught during twelve 35 minute class periods consisting of fifth and sixth graders weekly and reinforced in the upper grades through teacher collaboration and student work on assigned classroom projects. The proposed Alternative Standard allows the teacher librarian to teach all fifth and sixth grade classes on a weekly basis and allows the librarian to interact and provide guidance and assistance to all 7th and 8th grade teachers and students during their weekly assigned blocks of time in the library. The teacher librarian delivers content on the skills needed to access the library's print and electronic resources for research and pleasure, digital citizenship and literacy skills, Internet search skills, and exposure to a variety of genres for personal growth in the library through demonstrations, activities, on-line content and video content during 85% of the school day, while the paraprofessional staffs the library. The library paraprofessional ensures skilled assistance and access to the library when the teacher librarian is engaged in lesson planning and delivery. The Alternative Standard of 1 FTE teacher librarian and 1 FTE para-professional fulfills the needs of our school, library program and patrons.

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

*The number of hours of instructional time and library usage with each ELA teacher was recorded using Google calendar. A snapshot of the schedule in Google calendar is included for September 9-13, 2019 and January 6-10, 2020. Library Master Schedule for the 2019-2020 school years are attached.

* Circulation and patron statistics will be retrieved from Destiny Library Manager software. We would like to maintain a monthly circulation for print materials at or above 1000 items. Circulation statistics are included.

*STAR testing will be provided and assessed by the classroom teachers to assess student literacy achievements.

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

a. Workable.

In past history, Polson Middle School library has been staffed with a 1 FTE certified teacher librarian and a 0.5 FTE certified teacher librarian. Employing a 1 FTE paraprofessional to replace the 0.5 FTE teacher librarian is not only fiscally responsible to taxpayers in our community, but the addition of 4 hours allows greater opportunities and support for student interaction with library staff, workability of the library space, more productive library administration and continual coverage of the library for students and staff to access books and computers for research projects and reading for pleasure. As this change in staffing is not a change financially, Polson Middle School has the financial resources to staff the library through the employment and retention of a highly qualified 1 FTE library paraprofessional. The job description of the library paraprofessional is attached to this application. It is revised as needed to reflect changes in library services and the duties and skills required. This document provides a basis for job performance evaluation and serves as a model for recruitment, hiring and training. The current library paraprofessional transferred internally from a position at Polson Middle School and has a strong relationship with the librarian, staff and students, therefore making for a smooth transition to the library.

b Educationally Sound.

The library staffing arrangement of 1 FTE certified teacher librarian and 1 FTE para-professional has been in place at Polson Middle School beginning June 2019. The support of the paraprofessional has been very important to the development of many aspects of library services including the expansion of reader's advisory, book displays, and smooth operation for students and staff.

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

The teacher librarian is fulfilling the administrative duties of the library which are outlined in Standard 10.55.1801. Selection and management of the print collection and electronic resources, long range planning and program development, communication and cooperation with local and regional libraries and staff, and participation in school-wide and district level committees are priorities, including the K-12 Technology Committee, the Middle School English Language Arts Professional Learning Community and collaboration with the Indian Education for All committee members. Polson Schools K-12 teacher librarians meet regularly to develop and implement curriculum, plan for teacher training, cooperative purchases and professional development. The teacher librarian participates in the district's Professional Growth and Evaluation Process which includes a teacher librarian strand. Polson Schools Professional Growth and Evaluation Process is attached. The process guides continued growth and improvement. Polson Middle School aims to be compliant with Administrative Rule 10.55.1801.

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

Required school district signatures:

Board Chair Name: Chanel Lake

Board Chair Signature: Chanel Lake Date: 2/25/2020

Superintendent Name: Rex Wertz

Superintendent Signature: [Signature]
Date 2/25/2020

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 April 23, 2020
 Approve Deny

Board of Public Education Chair [Signature]
Date 5/7/2020
 Approve Deny

REGULAR BOARD MEETING
February 10, 2020
POLSON DISTRICT OFFICE

CALL TO ORDER

Board Chair Chanel Lake called the Board Meeting to order at 5:32 pm. In attendance were; Chair Lake, Trustee McGinnis, Trustee Anderson, Trustee Bojorquez, Trustee Dupuis, Trustee Muzquiz, Superintendent Wertz, Business Manager Pamela Clary and list of others present included upon request.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

WELCOME AND DIRECTIONS FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

BOARD COMMENTS

PUBLIC COMMENTS

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Item 1 - Approval of Minutes - January 21, 2020 Special Board Meeting -

Trustee Dupuis made the motion to approve the Special Board Meeting minutes from January 21, 2020 as presented. Trustee Bojorquez seconded the motion. The motion passed uncontested.

Item 2 - Approval of Minutes - January 21, 2020 Regular Board Meeting -

Trustee Anderson made the motion to approve the Regular Board Meeting minutes from January 21, 2020 as presented. Trustee Dupuis seconded the motion. The motion passed uncontested.

Item 3 - Approval of Minutes - January 28, 2020 Special Board Meeting -

Trustee Bojorquez made the motion to approve the Special Board Meeting minutes from January 28, 2020 as presented. Trustee Anderson seconded the motion. The motion passed uncontested.

COMMUNICATIONS/DISCUSSION

Item 4 - Polson High School Representative Update - Davis Smith -

Davis told trustees of the sports and activities underway. He reported fifteen wrestlers were qualified to go to State and basketball divisional were coming up the following weekend. He said the Speech and Debate placed 5th at State. He also told trustees of some projects which the BOG were organizing.

Item 4 - Indian Education Committee (IEC) Update - Chauncey Means -

Chairman Chauncey was present to report family night in December drew in over one hundred in attendance. The next meeting in February will be at the High School.

Item 5 - Polson Scholarship and Education Foundation -

Ryan Gage in attendance to present three scholarship awards. Ms. Peck received a scholarship to fund STEM supplies for Kindergarten. Ms. Morrison received a scholarship to fund the project sparking interest. Ms. Erickson received a scholarship to fund a reading project, if it fits, read it. Gage also reported they still had up to fifteen thousand to award, and encouraged teachers to submit applications.

Item 6 - Superintendents Report - Superintendent Wertz

Mr. Wertz told trustees of the ice cream social to thank and celebrate paraprofessional and counselors in our district. He spoke of the Special Olympics snowshoe event held last week. Wertz reported about the enrollment count day. He told trustees of the recent phishing attempts and for staff to be on high alert.

Item 7 - Facility Projects Update - Superintendent Wertz

Mr. Wertz told trustees about the times scheduled in each building, for staff to visit with Steve L'Reaux about ideas they see, when the bond levy passes this second time.

Wertz also reported a meeting with CSC and Swank was collaborative and helpful in getting to a better understanding the differences between the two costs of the Linderman Gym project.

Item 8 - Polson High School Swim Team - Peter Hamilton, Jay Sampson, Tana Seeley -

Tana presented the idea of adding swimming to our sports roster at the High School level. She explained what it would require, how many meets there would be, a possibility of having a Co-Op or no, processes, and costs. Mr. Hamilton also added info and helped to answer questions from Trustees. The trustees asked them to find out costs, donations, budget breakdown, and a survey of interested students.

Item 9 - Board Committee Updates

- a. **Facilities Committee - Anderson, Muzquiz**
- b. **Policy Committee - Dupuis and Bojorquez**
- c. **Budget Committee - Lake, McDonald**
- d. **Negotiations Committee - PEA - Lake and McDonald**
PCEA - Bojorquez, Lake, and Orien
- e. **Class A Caucus Committee - McGinnis**
- f. **Transportation - Anderson, Muzquiz**
- g. **Superintendent Evaluation Report - Lake, McGinnis, Anderson**
- h. **Calendar Committee - Lake, Muzquiz, and Anderson**
- i. **Sabbatical Committee - McDonald and Bojorquez**

Item 10 - Budget Update - Pamela Clary

Clary went over the budget reports as submitted. Clary also reported to the trustees the FY21 Impact Aid applications were submitted, The Elementary count was up and High School was down. Transportation reimbursement claims, TR-6's were submitted for the first semester, which is for the eleven routes we run.

CONSENT AGENDA

Item 11 - Approval of Payroll, Claims, Travel Requests and Activity Fund Requests

Trustee Anderson made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Trustee Dupuis seconded the motion and it passed uncontested.

NEW BUSINESS

Chair Lake moved item 16 up ahead of Item 12-

Item 16 - Recommendation to Approve Application to the MHSA to Apply for a High School Swim Team for the 2020-2021 School Year - Peter Hamilton, Don Toth -

Mr. Hamilton spoke to trustees what he had found out from other schools with a swim team as well as what he put together for a budget. He presented three scenarios to consider, which influences the decision. There was a full house of students, and parents in support of the program. Discussion with the trustees, staff and community was positive and productive.

Trustee McGinnis made a motion to approve to apply to MHSA for a swimming program for the FY21 School year. Trustee Bojorquez seconded the motion and it passed uncontested.

Item 12 - Recommendation to Approve Policies - Carl Elliott, HR Director

Carl Elliott presented two policies to approve. Trustee McGinnis made the motion to approve the policies. Trustee Bojorquez seconded the motion and it passed uncontested.

Item 13 - Recommendation to approve Polson Middle School Library Accreditation Variances - Jesse Yarbrough, Amber Tucker

Mr. Yarbrough and Ms. Tucker explained how much better it really is with two full time folks in the library, using a full time librarian and a full time paraprofessional. Trustee Bojorquez made a motion to approve the accreditation variance request with the cost neutral correction in the narration. Trustee McGinnis seconded the motion and it passed uncontested.

Item 14 - Recommendation to approve Out of State Travel for High School Choir - Peter Hamilton

Trustee Dupuis made a motion to approve three students, for the out of State Travel to go to the All-Northwest Choir Festival in Spokane, WA. Trustee Anderson seconded the motion and it passed uncontested.

Item 15 - Recommendation to approve Out of State Travel for Polson Tennis - Peter Hamilton

Trustee Dupuis made a motion to approve four students, for the out of State Travel to go to watch a professional tennis tournament in Palm Springs, CA. Trustee McGinnis seconded the motion and it passed uncontested.

Item 17 - Recommendation to call for Trustee Election - Pamela Clary

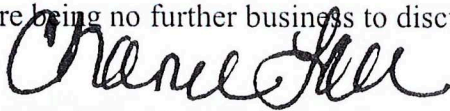
Trustee McGinnis made a motion to call for election for two trustee positions. Trustee Bojorquez seconded the motion and it passed uncontested.

Item 18 - Recommendation to Approve Personnel Report - Carl Elliott, HR Director

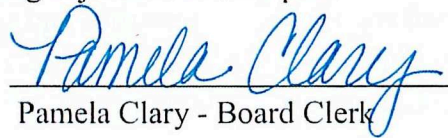
Carl Elliott made the recommendation to approve the Personnel reports as submitted. Trustee Dupuis made the motion to approve the Personnel report for the High School District. Trustee Anderson seconded the motion and it passed uncontested.

Trustee McGinnis made the motion to approve the Personnel Report for the Elementary District. Trustee Anderson seconded the motion and it passed uncontested.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.



Chanel Lake - Board Chair



Pamela Clary - Board Clerk