

VARIANCES TO STANDARDS APPLICATION
Renewal Application (three years)

Purpose: [ARM 10.55.604\(4\)](#) "Following the second year of implementation of a variance to standards, the school district shall provide evidence to the Superintendent of Public Instruction that the methods selected by the district implement, meet, or exceed results that could have been achieved under established standards."

DUE DATE:

First Monday in March

COUNTY: Missoula

DISTRICT: Hellgate Elementary

LIST EACH SCHOOL THAT IS REQUESTING THE VARIANCE:

Hellgate Elementary Early Childhood Building and Hellgate Elementary Primary Building

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.**

Standard 10.55.709 - Library Media Services (K-12)

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

At the March 2, 2022 scheduled school board meeting for the Hellgate Elementary Board of Trustees, in an open meeting format, school trustees, school administrators, school teachers, and local community stakeholders (parents as well as taxpayers) were provided the opportunity to hear the school district's position on why the variance request was being put forth, as a renewal of the variance, as well as given the opportunity to engage in conversation on the merits of that request. See the attached school board meeting agenda as well as the unofficial school board meeting.

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

At the March 2, 2022 regularly scheduled school board meeting for the Hellgate Elementary Board of Trustees, in an open meeting format, school trustees, school administrators, school teachers, and local community stakeholders (parents as well as taxpayers) were provided the opportunity to hear the school district's position on why the variance request was being put forth, as a variance renewal, as well as given the opportunity to engage in conversation on the merits of that request. See the attached school board meeting agenda as well as the unofficial school board meeting.

4. **Attach Board of Trustee meeting minutes that show the Board of Trustees approved the application for a renewal variance at an official, properly noticed meeting.**
5. **Reflection upon initial variance:**
 - a. **Describe the specific measurable objectives that were listed in the initial variance application that demonstrated how the proposed variance was to meet or exceed the results under the current standard(s).**

By any reasonable measure, Hellgate Elementary students compete and compare favorably with other Montana students in terms of academic, social, and emotional achievement and development. Hellgate Elementary will continue to use specific measurable objectives that were listed in the initial variance application to show that its students achieve at a high rate in comparison to other Montana students whether the comparisons be on the Smarter Balanced Assessment or on local assessments, such as the NWEA "Measurement of Academic Progress", Dibels, MobyMax assessments, FastForward program assessments, and/or the Montana Digital Academy "Ed Ready" program assessments.

- b. **Provide a summary of the evidence or data gathered to demonstrate that the initial variance meets or exceeds results that could have been achieved under the established standard.**

Hellgate Elementary used quantitative data gathered from a plethora of assessment programs to document progress toward meeting measurable objectives in terms of student academic achievement. Assessments such as Smarter Balanced Assessment and/or local assessments, like the NWEA "Measurement of Academic Progress", Dibels, MobyMax, Fast Forward, and/or the Montana Digital Academy, and authentic classroom assessments were used to gather the necessary documentation to indicate whether or not the school district is meeting its state/district measurable goals. In addition, on the qualitative side, the school district gathered necessary data from the administration of the school district's "Student School Community Perception" survey which sought to measure student feelings, perceptions, and comfort levels as a student in the school community.

- c. **After reflection on the initial variance, describe any adjustments that need to be made to meet the specific needs of the students in the school(s).**

Hellgate Elementary does not believe that any adjustments to the initial variance needs to be made to meet the specific needs of the student(s) in the school.

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

As with all things that Hellgate Elementary embarks on with respect to the education of its K-8 students, it is the mission of the school district to provide an educational learning environment that supports and sustains academic achievement, academic excellence, and life-long learning for all students. In partnership, is the vision of the school district that each student be actively involved in their learning, motivated for the future, and prepared to successfully embrace future opportunities and meet future academic, social, and emotional challenges.

Hellgate Elementary believes that its current library staffing configuration with two licensed and endorsed librarians working hand-in-hand with two library paraprofessionals keeps the school district true to its mission and vision.

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

By any reasonable measure, Hellgate Elementary students compete and compare favorably with other Montana students in terms of academic, social, and emotional achievement and development. Hellgate Elementary will continue to use specific measurable objectives that were listed in the initial variance application to show that its students achieve at a high rate in comparison to other Montana students whether the comparisons be on the Smarter Balanced Assessment or on local assessments, such as the NWEA "Measurement of Academic Progress", Dibels, MobyMax, FastForward, and/or the Montana Digital Academy. In addition, on the qualitative side, the school district will continue to gather necessary data from the

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

Hellgate Elementary will continue to use quantitative data gathered from a plethora of assessment programs to document progress toward meeting measurable objectives in the renewal variance request. Assessments such as Smarter Balanced Assessment and/or local assessments, like the NWEA "Measurement of Academic Progress", Dibels, MobyMax assessments, Fast Forward program assessments, and/or the Montana Digital Academy "EdReady" program assessments, and authentic classroom assessments.

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

Hellgate Elementary is committed to ensuring that its library media services staffing configuration not diminish a non-negotiable core value that district curriculum be aligned with state content program standards and state content-specific grade level learning progressions. Moreover, the district will commit that its library media services staffing configuration positively interfaces across all curriculum areas to provide the necessary educational support to maximize opportunities for students.

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

a. Workable

The school district has two certified librarians on staff and two library para-professionals. At this point in time, the school district believes that the staffing arrangement has, anecdotally for the purposes of this section of the variance request, proven to be manageable, effective, and efficient in meeting the school district's library specialist needs. The variance renewal request is because of the unique characteristic of having all four educational buildings on one campus.

b. Educationally sound.

Hellgate Elementary will use quantitative data gathered from a plethora of assessment programs to determine the educational effectiveness of the plan, such as Smarter Balance, NWEA "Measurement of Academic Progress", Dibels, MobyMax, Fast Forward, the Montana Digital Academy and authentic classroom assessments. On the qualitative side, the school district will gather necessary data from the "Student School Community Perception" survey to measure student perceptions on program effectiveness.

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

Outside of the variance request for standard 10.55.709, Hellgate Elementary is in compliance with all other Montana Office of Public Instruction and Montana Board of Public Education program accreditation standards under ARM 10.55.1101 through 10.55.2101. Moreover, the school district is committed to ensuring that its library specialist staffing configuration not diminish the core values that district curriculum be aligned with state content program standards and grade-level learning standards.

- d. **Where applicable, aligned with contend standards under ARM Chapters 53 and 54.**

Outside of the variance request for standard 10.55.709, Hellgate Elementary is in compliance with all other Montana Office of Public Instruction and Montana Board of Public Education content accreditation standards under ARM Chapter 53 (Content Standards) and 54 (Content Standards and Performance Descriptors) and is committed to ensuring that its library media services positively interfaces across all curriculum areas to provide the necessary educational support for students.

Required school district signatures:

Board Chair Name: Tom McLaughlin

Board Chair Signature:  Date: March 2, 2022

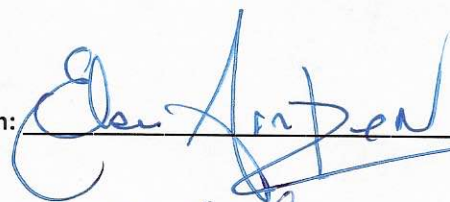
Superintendent Name: Douglas Reisig

Superintendent Signature:  Date: March 2, 2022


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:  Date: April 13 2022

Approve Deny

Board of Public Education Chair:  Date: 5/13/22

Approve Deny

Hellgate Elementary Board of Trustees
Special Meeting March 2, 2022
6:00 p.m.

OPENING

The Board of Trustees of Hellgate Elementary School District #4 met in special session on Wednesday, March 2, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. The meeting was held in-person and also broadcast by virtual video conferencing. The meeting was called to order by Board Chairman, Tom McLaughlin. Trustees participating were: Tom McLaughlin, Jack Babon, Kate Walker, Lori Christensen, Rich Thornock, and Rod Sharkey. Trustee Diane Beck joined the meeting via Zoom video conference. There were up to 38 in-person and online participants in the meeting.

CONSIDER ACCREDITATION VARIANCE RENEWAL REQUEST

A motion was made by Jack Babon to authorize the superintendent to submit an accreditation variance renewal waiver (for three additional years) to the Montana Office of Public Instruction to standard 10.55.709 (Library Media Services K-12). The motion was seconded by Rod Sharkey. There was discussion on the item. Voting in favor of the motion were Tom McLaughlin, Jack Babon, Kate Walker, Lori Christensen, Rich Thornock, and Rod Sharkey. Voting against the motion were none. The motion passed.

SUPERINTENDENT CANDIDATE FINALIST INTERVIEWS

The first two of four candidate finalists were interviewed by the Board of Trustees. The interview for Mr. Scott Kinney opened 6:15pm and closed at 7:25pm. The interview for Mr. Jon Konen opened at 7:30pm and closed at 9:00pm. Trustees asked each candidate a set of fifteen questions (copy of question set included with official minutes).

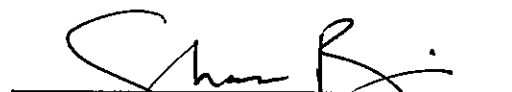
The Board is scheduled for another special session Thursday, March 3, 2022 to interview two additional candidates.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.



Tom McLaughlin, Board Chair



Shara Blair, Business Manager/Clerk