

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: 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 renewal variance application. Community stakeholder groups include parents, community members, and students as applicable.**

The sign-in sheet for the February 6, 2020 Read-In hosted by our Library is attached.

At each Read-In we mention that having two dedicated people in the Library allows us to offer read-in type activities as well as a more robust educational support program.

The sign-in sheet for the March  2022 meeting of the Polson School District Board of Trustees will be submitted after the 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.**

The sign-in sheet for the March  2022 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 approved the application for a renewal variance at an official, properly noticed meeting.**

See attached Board of Trustee minutes from March  2022



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).**

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



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.

*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 October 2021 and February 2022. Library Master Schedule for the 2020--2022 school years are attached.

* Collection circulation and patron library statistics were retrieved from Destiny Library Manager software. We would like to maintain and continue to see a monthly circulation for print materials at or above 1000 items. Circulation is currently above 1000 items. Circulation statistics are included from the 2020-21 school year and the 2021-22 school year to date.

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

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).

On reflection, the staffing variance in place at Polson Middle School continues to meet the needs of our school, library program, students and staff. A para-professional has been on the library staff for

one and a half years. This staff member is highly valued as she provides an exceptional level of support to students and staff.



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

*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 2020 and February 2022. Library Master Schedule for the 2021-22 school years are attached.

* Circulation and patron statistics will be retrieved from Destiny Library Manager software from school years 2020-21 and 2021-22 to date . We would like to maintain/ and or exceed monthly circulation for print materials at or above 1000 items.

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

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

The presence of the FTE library para-professional allows the teacher librarian to collaborate with staff and teach students throughout the day in the classroom or the library. Teachers can access the link to check availability of the library classroom areas and computer workstations. Information skills, including the research process, ethical use of information, the use of school-wide resource

databases and educational software subscriptions are taught in grades 9 - 12. The library staff work with classes and individual students to assist with information seeking strategies, giving proper credit for information sources and the synthesis and presentation of classroom assignments.



10. 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 conitual 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

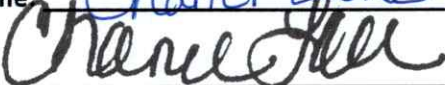


Elsie Arntzen, Superintendent • Montana Office of Public Instruction 9


December 2018

Required school district signatures:

Board Chair Name: Chanel Lake Board Chair

Signature:  Date: 3/14/2022

Superintendent Name: Mike Cutler Superintendent

Signature:  Date 3/14/2022

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 _____

Approve Deny

Board of Public Education Chair _____

Date _____

Approve Deny



REGULAR BOARD MEETING
March 14, 2022
POLSON SCHOOL BOARD TRUSTEES
DISTRICT BOARD ROOM

ITEM 1 - CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Chair McGinnis called the Regular Board Meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

In attendance were Vice Chair McGinnis Trustee Anderson, Trustee Hewankorn, Trustee Mercer, Trustee Orien, Superintendent Cutler, and Business Manager Clary.

Also in the board room; Cherry Valley Principal Gustafson, Linderman Principal Wilson, Middle School Principal Yarbrough, Vice Principal Mills, High School Principal Fors, Vice Principal/AD Bucarey, Curriculum Coordinator DiGiallonardo, HR/Communications Director Boen, IT Coordinator Fansher, Special Education Director Berg, Assistant Business Manager Anderson and PEA President Crosby. List of others included.

WELCOME AND DIRECTIONS FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

BOARD COMMENTS

PUBLIC COMMENTS Trustee Anderson congratulated the High School Pirate Boys Basketball team for the third place finish at the state tournament.

ITEM 2 - APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval of Minutes - February 14, 2022 Regular Board Meeting -

Trustee Mercer made the motion to approve the Regular Board Meeting minutes from February 14, 2022 with amended clerical correction. Trustee Anderson seconded the motion. The motion passed uncontested.

ITEM 3 - COMMUNICATIONS/DISCUSSION

Polson High School Update - Student Representative – N/A

Indian Education Committee (IEC) Update - N/A

Polson Scholarship and Education Foundation -N/A

Superintendent's Report - Mike Cutler, Superintendent

Mr. Cutler asked if there were any interested trustee to attend the Chamber Banquet. He told trustees of the committees formed for getting bond information out to the public. He reported the enrollment trend totals and included a graph showing trends from 2009-2010 to present.

MHSA Class A Baseball - Ethan Bucarey, Asst. Principal/Activities Director

This was tabled until the April meeting.

Principals Reports - Each Principal submits a short summary of what is currently going on in their building, which was included in the packet. They answer any questions Trustees may have.

High School - A Fors

Middle School - J Yarbrough

Linderman - K Wilson

Cherry Valley - J Gustafson

Board Committee Updates -

1. **Facilities Committee - Anderson, Muzquiz**
2. **Policy Committee - McGinnis, Hewankorn, adding Mercer**
3. **Budget Committee - Lake, Orien**
4. **Negotiations Committee - PEA - Lake, Hewankorn**
5. **Negotiations Committee - PCEA - Lake, Orien**
6. **Class A Caucus Committee - Mercer**
7. **Transportation - Anderson, Muzquiz**
8. **Superintendent Evaluation Report - McGinnis, Anderson**
9. **Calendar Committee - Lake, Muzquiz, and Anderson**

Budget Update - Pamela Clary

Clary told trustee of the current budget and expenditures of the general funds. She reminded all of the last day of which to sign an intent for trustee election. Clary also gave brief description of the current projects of importance she is working on including impact aid review and preliminary budgets.

ITEM 4 - CONSENT AGENDA

Approval of Payroll, Claims, Travel Requests and Activity Fund Requests

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

ITEM 5 -NEW BUSINESS

Recommendation to Approve Out of State Travel - Andy Fors, HS Principal

Fors asked trustees to approve the travel for the Western Civilization class of Students to take a trip to Chicago. Trustee **Mercer** made a motion to approve the travel. Trustee **Anderson** seconded the motion and it passed uncontested.

Recommend to Approve Polson Middle School Library Variance to Standards - Mike Cutler, Superintendent

Cutler asked trustees to approve the Middle School variance. Trustee **Mercer** made a motion to approve the variance. Trustees **Hewankorn and Orien** seconded the motion and it passed uncontested.

Recommendation to Approve Resolution for Senate Bill 307 - Pamela Clary, Business Manager/Board Clerk

Clary answered questions about the resolution and advertisement. Trustee **Orien** made a motion to approve the resolution as presented. Trustee **Anderson** seconded the motion and the motion passed uncontested.

Recommend to Approve the Purchase of a Bus - Mike Anderson, Transportation Director

Anderson asked trustees to approve the purchase of a 2023 Thomas Built Bus. Trustee **Orien** made a motion to approve the purchase. Trustee **Anderson** seconded the motion and it passed uncontested.

Recommend to Approve the Re-hire of Tenured Staff - Mike Cutler, Superintendent

Mr. Cutler asked trustee to approve the hire of the tenured High School staff. Trustee **Orien** made a motion to approve the tenured listing for hire. Trustee **Anderson** seconded the motion and it passed uncontested.

Cutler asked trustee to approve the hire of the tenured Elementary staff. Trustee **Hewankorn** made a motion to approve the tenured listing for hire. Trustee **Anderson** seconded the motion and it passed uncontested.

Recommendation to Approve Personnel Reports - Scott Boen, HR/Communications Director

Mr. Boen asked the trustees to approve the High School report as submitted.

Trustee **Orien** made the motion to approve the Personnel report for the High School as corrected. Trustee **Hewankorn** seconded the motion and it passed uncontested.

Mr. Boen asked the trustees to approve the Elementary report as submitted.

Trustee **Anderson** made the motion to approve the Personnel Report for the Elementary with the correction as well. Trustee **Hewankorn** seconded the motion and it passed uncontested.

Recommendation to Approve Out of District Reports - Mike Cutler, Superintendent

Mr. Cutler asked the trustees to approve the Elementary report as submitted.

Trustee **Hewankorn** made the motion to approve the Elementary report as submitted. Trustee **Anderson** seconded the motion and it passed uncontested.

Mr. Cutler asked the trustees to approve the High School report as submitted.

Trustee **Mercer** made the motion to approve the High School out of District report as submitted. Trustee **Orien** seconded the motion and it passed uncontested.

ITEM 6 - ADJOURN

Board Vice Chair McGinnis adjourned the meeting at 6:20 p.m.



Vice Chair Tim McGinnis



Business Manager/Board Clerk Pamela Clary