

**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."

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**DUE DATE:**

**First Monday in March**

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**COUNTY:** Big Horn

**DISTRICT:** Hardin Elementary

**LIST EACH SCHOOL THAT IS REQUESTING THE VARIANCE:**

**Fort Smith Elementary**

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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

- 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 PTO at Ft Smith Elementary School has always been a constant and positive support for the students. This committee helped to write and implement the River of Knowledge grant for the school library. This grant allowed the library to update it's reading materials and it's technology. The PTO continues to support the library with donations of books or funds to purchase books.

A meeting of the PTO took place on Monday the 7th of January. At this meeting the data from the report and the request for the renewal of the Library variance was shared with the parents.

- 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 PTO was informed of the Variance renewal process on Monday, Jan. 7th. A letter of support is attached.

The staff met multiple times to determine what data would best represent the students growth in reading. We then gathered the data and added it to our report.

The student data and the renewal plan was then presented to the Hardin School Board on Feb. 12th. Board Minutes for this meeting with approval of the renewal are attached.

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).**
    - 1) Maintain a .5 Library Aide that provides weekly services for our students.  
The schedule will consist of two 45 minute classes per week for each classroom.
    - 2) Ft Smith's Library Aide will continue to meet with District Librarians for training as needed.
  
  - 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.**
    - 1) Maintain a .5 Library Aide -
      - 2018/2019 Library Schedule Attached
      - Class structure continues for one class dedicated to exploration of literature through read alouds and selection of books for checkout. The second class will be for skill building activities in research, with 4th and 5th graders completing a research project. All students are encouraged to check out 3-5 books per week and many of the students check out additional books to AR reading challenges that are set for each quarter.
    - 2) Mrs. Miller attends all meetings with the District Librarians which have included training in the new version of Alexandria software.
    - 3) Looking at academic data for our students, we chose three to demonstrate student growth in reading. Data Attached
      - ISIP Reading Percentile Rank - this data shows that students making yearly improvements in reading and they are making growth in their percentile ranking overall.
      - ISIP Lexile scores, showing yearly growth.
      - Average AR points attained yearly

- 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).**

At this time we see no adjustments that need to be made to this variance. Mrs. Miller is doing an excellent job maintaining the Library. She has attended training on the newer version of software used for check out and she consults frequently with the district Librarians on issues that arise. We have made a renewed effort to update books in the Library and with a focus on informational texts and chapter books that appeal to our 4th and 5th grade boys.

Mrs. Miller still works as a .5 Library aide with 2 classes weekly for each classroom. She develops lessons that are in alignment with the MT Standards and collaborates with classroom teachers to support other curricular areas.

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

The goal of the renewal variance is to continue to provide high quality Library services and materials for the students of Ft. Smith.

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

- 1) The Library will continue with a yearly schedule that meets the requirements in the variance.
- 2) The Library aide will continue to attend all meetings with the District Librarians.
- 3) We will continue to monitor the academic data that has been identified for student growth in reading.

-ISIP Reading Percentile Rank - this data shows that students making yearly improvements in reading and they are making growth in their percentile ranking overall.

-ISIP Lexile scores, showing yearly growth in reading levels.

-AR Points, showing student reading of materials checked out.

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

- 1) Yearly Library schedule will be kept.
- 2) The Librarian will keep notes from meetings attended with district Librarians.
- 3) We will continue to collect data in the academic areas that have been identified for showing student growth in reading.
  - ISIP Reading Percentile Rank
  - ISIP Lexile scores
  - AR points

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

This variance will allow Ft Smith to maintain it's Library and to continue to provide all services for students that are required by the state. With only 35 students and the remote location, Ft Smith is not able to hire a certified Librarian due to availability and cost. By maintaining an open Library with a .5 Library aide we are providing our students with a classroom and resources that are beneficial for their education.

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

**a. Workable**

This variance is workable because the district is committed to supporting this small school with the necessary staff to support all areas of instruction. The position of the Library aide is given a .5 time slot to fulfill the requirements as needed.

Full time positions are desirable in this location so by dedicating .5 of a full time aide position to the Library we are able to keep it staffed with an employee that has experience in the school, in the Library and in the community.

**b. Educationally sound.**

Ft Smith will continue to provide library services to our students. With this plan we guarantee that the students will continue to receive instruction that meets and exceeds the state accreditation standards.

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

Mrs. Miller collaborates with our classroom teachers to identify resources that are needed in the library. The classroom teachers have the background and instructional knowledge of all the elementary educational standards set for their grade levels. Information is shared with Mrs. Miller on what resources are needed and if additional resources are needed to supplement the current collections. These would include curriculum specific and Montana American Indian primary sources.

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

Our current library and media classes are focused on collaboration with classroom teachers to help deliver educational lessons and materials that support all content standards in grades K-5.

**Required school district signatures:**

Board Chair Name: Jodeen K Marston

Board Chair Signature: Jodeen K Marston Date: 1-22-19

Superintendent Name: Eldon C. Johnson

Superintendent Signature: Eldon C Johnson Date 1-22-19

**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 4/15/2019.  
 Approve  Deny

Board of Public Education Chair Darlene Short Date 5/08/19  
 Approve  Deny

## **REGULAR MEETING – January 22, 2019**

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, January 22, 2019.

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 Crystal Uffelman, Trustee Newton Old Crow, Jr., Trustee Jordan Straley, Trustee Cori Watson, Vice Chair Jon Wells, Superintendent E. Chad Johnson and District Clerk Kym Kern.

Also in attendance: Melvin Ware, Chad Guptill, Kenny Kepp, Karla Clark, Teri Wagner, Mark Schoen, Sandra Francis, Judy Arnold, Christy Kepp-Morse, Scott Brokaw, Georgia Forney and Amy Stops.

Chairman Marston asked if there was any objection to approving the minutes of the January 8, 2019, regular meeting, without being read. There being no objection the minutes were approved.

Mr. Old Crow, Jr. was still reviewing claims and would make his recommendation upon completion.

### **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Enclosed in the Superintendent's packet was a letter from John Small, recently elected Big Horn County Superintendent of Schools, introducing himself and providing contact information.

Superintendent Johnson stated he would be in Helena on Friday attending the Legislative session regarding preschool and safety.

A letter dated January 12, 2019, from the Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI) was distributed in the packet from the Superintendent. The letter stated OPI "has designated Hardin Public Schools as a "high risk" subgrantee for grant and audit monitoring purposes." Superintendent Johnson stated this information is based on an audit from FY2016-2017 and questioned why we are just now receiving this notice. He reported having left a message for Susie Hedalen, Assistant Superintendent, and if he does not hear back from her he will find her in Helena when he is there on Friday. He will keep the Board informed of what he finds out.

Superintendent Johnson stated that he is planning to attend the National Association of Federally Impacted Schools (NAFIS) Spring Conference which is March 16-19 in Washington, DC, unless the government is still shutdown.

Based on information provided by Mr. Hankins, Hardin High School graduation rate is up to eighty-one percent (81%). Discussion followed. Information was shared regarding the upcoming PIR day on Monday, January 28, and trainings being offered to staff.

Superintendent Johnson reported the High School Budget Amendment Resolution is removed from the agenda this evening. The Petition for Permission which was sent to OPI has been approved and the Resolution will be placed on the 2/12/19 agenda.

A sample agenda was distributed for the intended special meeting to be held on 1/29/19 and Superintendent Johnson received approval from the Board to proceed with the meeting.

Superintendent Johnson provided a brief update of the Annual Montana High School Association meeting, stating eight (8) proposals were presented. He said Mike Erickson will come in a provide more details from the meeting which was held on 1/21/19.

Superintendent Johnson reported he has not received any additional information on the Hardin Community Activity Center (HCAC); however, we need to start presenting what information we do have such as expenditures and revenue. He said he wants it known there have not been any decisions made as to what will happen with, or to, the Hardin Community Activity Center.

### **STAFFING ISSUES**

Superintendent Johnson presented the following staffing changes and recommended approval:

CLASSIFIED New Hires:

- Crecensio Walkscesealey, Custodian – Hardin Middle School



- Demi Pitsch, Paraprofessional I (Special Education) – Hardin Primary School
- McKenna Rivera, Paraprofessional I (Special Education) – Hardin Primary School
- Angela Ramirez, Assistant Cook – School Nutrition Department

CLASSIFIED Resignation:

- Bailey Nedens, Paraprofessional II – Hardin Intermediate School

ATHLETICS / ACTIVITIES:

- Jake Krum, Coach – Middle School Boys' Basketball
- Ardis Bott, Activity Bus Driver

VOLUNTEERS (*Criminal Background Report Completed*):

Yvon Little Light – Crow Agency Public School	Vicky Jane Carlson, Hardin Primary School
Ashley Quanbeck, Hardin Primary School	Shane Morse, Hardin Middle School

Mr. Wells made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Watson, to approve the staffing changes as recommended. The motion passed unanimously.

Overtime for pay period 12/30/18-1/12/19, paid on 1/18/19, was reviewed with the Board. Overtime in Hardin Middle School (HMS) was the result of custodial turnover which should be eliminated with the current hiring.

Mr. Old Crow, Jr. reviewed claims in the amount of \$335,166.30 and with the exception of one claim for \$5,000 he was unable to locate, he recommended approval. Business Manager Judy Arnold determined the claim had been pulled from the pile earlier so Superintendent Johnson could sign it and it was not returned to the stack. Chairman Marston asked if there was any objection to approving the claims; there being no objection, the claims were approved.

**BUILDING ISSUES**

Christy Kepp-Morse and Amy Stops, advisors for what has been known as the HMS Media Club, provided information and a presentation of what the club is about and the reason to request the name change to 'Make a Difference Club'. The Club is supported by GEARUP and is for students grades 6-8. The students are encouraged to get to know different type of kids and accept them for who they are and as they are. Mrs. Stops spoke about the next project, 'Kindness Rocks', where students write sentiments on rocks and then they are put together and displayed such as a walkway or trail. Students who are part of the Club also volunteer to work the HMS concession stands which teaches them skills on handling money and counting back change as well as working with the public.

Mrs. Morse stated that in order to make the necessary change to the bank account, the Board needs to approve changing the name from HMS Media Club to HMS Make a Difference Club. Mrs. Watson made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Uffelman, to approve the club name change as requested. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Wells thanked Mrs. Morse and Mrs. Stops for their contributions.

The Fort Smith Elementary School (FSES) Variances to Standards Renewal Application for Library Media Services was presented to the Board for approval. The application must be renewed every three years and is due by the first Monday in March. Mrs. Francis reviewed the application. Mr. Wells made a motion, seconded by Mr. Straley, to approve the FSES Variances to Standards Renewal Application for Library Media Services as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Distributed in the packets to Board was the Impact Aid Program Indian Policies and Procedures (IPP) for FY2020. This was updated twice last year, with this being the most recent version which was approved in May 2018. Mrs. Kern reported that Federal Programs Director, Beth Howe-Yarlott, stated the only changes to this IPP is where it reads 'FY20' and the date of approval. Mr. Wells made a motion, seconded by Mr. Old Crow, Jr., to approve the Impact Aid Program Indian Policies and Procedures for FY2020. The motion passed unanimously.

**BUDGETING ISSUES**

The High School Budget Amendment Resolution was postponed until 2/12/19.

## TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

There were no transportation issues to report.

Distributed in the packets to Board was the 2018-19 Weather-Related Protocol for Hardin School District 17H & 1. Superintendent Johnson created the guidelines to provide uniformity and consistency throughout the District for parents and staff. This information will be on the Districts' website and will also appear in the newspaper.

## PAC / PTO / COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Mark Schoen stated that the day before the Christmas break the Army National Guard from Billings brought equipment to Hardin High School for students to check out. He wanted thank them for taking the time to bring this equipment to the students.

## EXECUTIVE SESSION – SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION

At 6:47 p.m., Chairman Marston called the meeting to executive session because the matter to come before the Board is the Superintendent evaluation, and individual privacy in this matter clearly exceeds the merits of public disclosure.

At 7:45 p.m., Chairman Marston reconvened the meeting to open session.

## OTHER


A Special meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 29, 2019, beginning at 5:30 p.m., at the District Administration Office, 401 Park Rd, Hardin, MT, for the purpose of reviewing existing plans, options and costs associated with the High School Track and Football Field Renovation Projects.

The next regular meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 22, 2019, beginning at 5:30 p.m., at the District Administration Office, 401 Park Rd, Hardin, MT.

With no further business to come before the Board, Chairman Marston adjourned the meeting at 7:46 p.m.

  
Jodeen K. Marston, Board Chairman

ATTEST:

  
Kym Kern, District Clerk