



VARIANCES TO STANDARDS APPLICATION

March 2, 2015

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

- First semester implementation; March 2, 2015
- Second semester implementation; July 6, 2015

COUNTY: Flathead

DISTRICT: Kila School District #20

LIST THE SCHOOL OR MULTIPLE SCHOOLS THAT ARE REQUESTING THE VARIANCE(S):

Kila Primary k-6, and Kila Middle School 7-8

1. Is this an initial application (2 years) or a Renewal application (3 years)? Initial Application
2. Is this for first semester implementation or second semester implementation? First Semester
3. Standard(s) for which a variance is requested, i.e., 10.55.709. If there is a program delivery standard, be sure to list it as well. For example, 10.55.1801.
10:55.704(1)(b) - Administrative Personnel: Assignment of District Superintendents
4. Please attach evidence through official minutes of the board of trustees that local school community stakeholders were involved in the consideration and development of the proposed variance to standards. Stakeholder groups include trustees, administrators, teachers, classified school staff, parents, community members, and students as applicable. Board meeting February 10th, 2015 (attached). Administrator (Jason Christy-School Principal) reported that he has discussed solution options with multiple stakeholders of the school district.
5. Please provide evidence that the board of trustees adopted its application for variance at an official, properly noticed meeting of its board of trustees.
Board Meeting Minutes February 10th, 2015 (attached).
6. Describe the variance requested.
Instead of requiring a .1 superintendent MCA (10.55.704), and a .5 MCA (10.55.705), we request that you allow our present staffing of a 1.0 FTE k-12 endorsed principal to fulfill these roles.





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

Our mission in making this proposal is to save the district money for staffing a superintendent when the current administrator has been fulfilling the required tasks for that last 2 and half years. Our goal is to maintain our current staffing assignments without adding more personnel.

8. List at least one specific measurable objective(s) that demonstrates that the proposed variance will meet or exceed the results under the current standard(s).

The current administrator will continue to fulfill the job descriptions of both Principal and Superintendent, by completing the states required reports and participating in local and state level administrative meetings and organizations: Northwest Montana association School Superintendent (NW MASS), Flathead Special Education Cooperative (FSEC), Northwest Montana Educational Cooperative (NWMEC), and Crossroads Cooperative (CC) boards. Our administrator is an active member of 3 of these boards. He is on the Negotiations committee for the FSEC, the Finance committee for the NWMEC, and has been on the Negotiations committee for two years and now is the Board Chair of the CC.

Additionally, there are various administrative performance objectives that have been performed by our administrator in his current job assignment. A few of these are listed below:

1. The principal attends all School Board Meetings, serving the role of advisor as prescribed in the school board Policy.
2. The principal conducts staff evaluations per Montana Educator Performance Appraisal System.
3. The principal completes all reports required by the Office of Public Instruction.
4. The principal monitors student behavior.
5. The principal communicates directly with all stakeholders (parents, community, staff and trustees).
6. The principal carries out all duties assigned by the Board of Trustees and the state of Montana.
7. The principal organizes and participates in regularly conducted committee meetings designed to include and illicit stakeholder (community, parent, staff, and board members) input and decision making that values stakeholder goals and gives direction to the district to meet those goals.

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

Completion of TEAMS (Terms of Employment and Master Schedule) report, Title I report, CSIP (Continuous School improvement Plan) report per OPI deadlines. Attend, collaborate and report about Kila School Board Meetings, as well as FSEC, NWMEC, and CC board meetings.

10. In what way does this variance to standard meet the specific needs of the students in your school(s)? Since the specific needs of the students in our schools have been met previously by the current administrator we presently employ, we anticipate that their needs will continue to be met.



11. Variance to Standard: Outline how and why the proposed variance would be:**a. Workable. (Sufficient district resources are available for the success of the variance.)**

This variance relieves the district from the difficult task of fulfilling a .1 superintendent position, or for requesting our present administrator to return to school and take on an immediate internship. The variance allows the Board or Trustees to meet student specific needs by allowing the allocation of resources to areas that more directly impact students rather than increasing District administrative FTE. Resources such as instructional aides, up-to-date textbooks, additional certified staff to reduce class size etc. are all more student centered ways to allocate Kila school resources rather than adding .1 FTE superintendent.

b. Educationally sound. (Applicant has relied on sound research as a rationale for the variance.)

This proposal is educationally sound. There is no research to indicate nor support the impact of a .1 superintendent for a school with 13 FTE versus 14 FTE. The number is arbitrary and does not meet the individual needs of a small school district. Educational research often finds rural education positive for students. The small school model with one district, one school, one administrator creates community and enhances communication and collaboration.

c. Where applicable, aligned with program standards under ARM 10.55.1101 through 10.55.1901.

ARM 10.55.1101-10.55.1901 are the delivery standards for Communication Arts, Arts, Health Enhancement, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Career and Vocational/Technical education, Library Media, and School Counseling.

By employing one full time principal, versus a .5 principal and .1 superintendent, we believe our proposal positively impacts delivery of content standards. Principals are typically the educational leader who directs and supports the delivery of these standards not a .1 superintendent.

12. Designed to meet the content standards for this area of the curriculum (only applies to those standards which also have related curriculum content standards).

N/A

RENEWAL APPLICATION ONLY: Please attach a summary of the data gathered to demonstrate that the variance cycle ending June 30, met or exceeded the standard. State the measurable objective for the initial or previous application.



Required school district signatures:

Board Chair Name: Angie Giles

Board Chair Signature: [Signature] Date: 2-17-15

Superintendent Name: Jason Christy

Superintendent Signature: [Signature]
Date 2-17-15

Mail your 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 ____ Disapprove

Board of Public Education Chair _____

Date _____

____ Approve ____ Disapprove

KILA SCHOOL DISTRICT # 20
PO BOX 40
KILA, MT 59920
(406) 257-2428
MINUTES

February 10, 2015 Regular Board Meeting
5:30 p.m.

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:32 pm. Present: Chairman Angie Giles, Jennifer Crowley, Erica Stevens, Lars Haagerup, Lanti Carlson and Jason Christy. Guests: Katie Turner.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. CONSENT AGENDA

- Minutes
- Warrants

Erica Stevens motioned to approve the Consent Agenda. Jennifer Crowley 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

IV. GUEST COMMENTS

None

V. ACTION ITEMS

a. 2nd reading Policy

#1310-3210-3231P-3600P-5125-5336

Erica Stevens motioned to adopt the above policies except 3231P. More research will be done. Lars Haagerup 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

b. Shaunna Ogden 2014-15 Substitute teaching contract

Erica Stevens motioned to approve Shaunna Ogden's contract. Jennifer Crowley 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

c. Approve Variant to Standard

Lars Haagerup motioned to approve the Variant to Standard Application. Lanti Carlson 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

d. Letter of Retirement

Erica Stevens motioned to acknowledge Shirley Gunter's retirement letter at the end of her 2014-15 contract. Jennifer Crowley 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

e. Letter of Resignation

Erica Stevens motion to acknowledge Radovana Cooper's letter of resignation at the end of her 2014-15 Contract. Discussion followed. Lars Haagerup 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

VI. INFORMATION ITEMS

a. Principal's Report

1. School Behavior Plan

Jason Christy informed the board of The Eight Keys to Success. Discussion followed.

2. Committee updates

Jason Christy updated the board of the Professional Development, Safety and Library committee meetings.

3. Latch-Key

Subjects discussed were: Possibly the Marion Afterschool Coordinator running Kila School's Latch-Key program, No space for Latch-Key and suggestions on moving it the Kila Community Church.

b. Budget meeting committee

Angie Giles and Lanti Carlson will be on the Budget Committee.

c. Certified Negotiations

Due to a two year contract there will be NO negotiations for 2015-16.

d. Open an Adult Education Fund

Interest has been expressed in an Adult Education Fund. A description was given to the board. The Adult Education Fund will be placed as an action item next month.

e. Clerk Evaluation for March

A draft of Sharon Leach's evaluation that will be conducted by Jason Christy was presented to the board. The draft will be presented for final approval from the

Kila School Demographics:

Kila School District # 20 is located 10 miles west of Kalispell, Montana. Kila is a rural community. The 2014/2015 enrollment is 183 students as of the October count. The district has had a 40% enrollment increase over the last 10 years. The percentage of students on free and reduced lunch in our Primary School is 64%. Our 7th/8th grade free and reduced lunch percentage is 52%. Kila School has numerous rental properties and low income housing which contribute to the percentage of poverty.

The district is housed on one campus, and operates as one school. However the district is classified as having two schools - a K-6 school and a 7th/8th grade school per Montana Code.

Kila District employs 13.2 Certified employees in addition to a full time certified principal. There are 11 full time classroom teachers, as well as a full time Special Education teacher and Health Enhancement teacher. The district also employs a counselor at .6 FTE, and a music teacher at .6 FTE.

Kila School District # 20 operates with a General Fund Budget (Fiscal Year 2015) of \$1.146 million. In addition, the district has the following budgeted funds: Transportation (\$37,789), Tuition (\$43,912), Retirement (\$150,677), Technology (\$9,488), Flexibility (\$10,993). The district has not run a levy in numerous years, and levies previously run have a history of failing.

During the Fiscal year 2014, Kila School District #20 expended \$8,702 per student. Kila has only an 24.25% district levy as source of our general fund budget. It is this low level of funding that prompts the district to submit this request, a variance from standards that don't meet the demographic needs of our district.

Montana Office of Public Instruction
Variance to Standards Review Board
Denise Juneau, State Superintendent
Box 202501
Helena, MT 59620-2501

RECEIVED
FEB 23 2015
**SUPERINTENDENT
OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

Honorable Superintendent Juneau,

On behalf of the Kila School District #20, I hereby submit this request for relief from Accreditation Standard: 10.55.704 (1)(b) "School systems with more than 14 and fewer than 18 FTE licensed staff shall employ a part-time, at a minimum of .10 FTE, licensed superintendent. One individual may serve as both superintendent and principal as defined in ARM 10.55.705(2)(a) or (2)(b)"; Supporting our request is a standard we are already exceeding: 10.55.705(2)(b) (Assignment of Administrators/Principals) 0.50 FTE licensed principal shall be assigned to schools with enrollments of 175 to fewer than 250 students. We are currently at 14.2 FTE

The District presently employs a full time certified principal who has 6 years teaching and 2.5 years administrative experience. Our primary school, has 136 students and our 7th/8th grade school has 39 students. Our student enrollment thus requires us to have only a .5 principal. By providing a full time administrator, the district feels we are more than meeting the requirements when Accreditation Standards 10.55.704 and 10.55.705 are viewed through the lens of needs for a small rural school.

To support this request, the District has attached a completed Variances to Standards Application and a demographic handout to assist the Superintendent and the Variance to Standards Review Board in understanding the needs of our district.

The principle purpose of this request is that hiring a .1 superintendent in addition to a full time principal would be cost prohibitive and inefficient for our district. Additionally, finding a candidate interested in being hired as a .1 FTE (½ day per week) does not seem likely.

While the Superintendent and the Variance Standards Review Board consider this application, please take into account the FTE and enrollment of the district. Our FTE is only .2 over that which does not require a superintendent. Additionally, our enrollment in the primary school (136) is only 77% of the student base required for just a half time principal. Since we are located on one campus, students, staff and parents have ready access to the administration. Policies and job descriptors are in place that support having the principal perform superintendent assignments. The district believes that an individual who is certified as a principal, has performed the duties of a superintendent for over two years, and whose (1.0 FTE) is over what the combined requirement for 10.55.704 & 705 (0.5 FTE) is sufficient for efficiently operating the administrative roles at Kila School.

In conclusion, I would like to point out that Kila School has unique characteristics to other districts in the state. We have two schools (k-6 & 7th/8th) who truly operate as one. Almost all of our personnel serve district and school roles. Our unique size and dynamics call for unique solutions to administrative needs, which we feel are being met by the FTE we currently employ.

Respectfully submitted,

Jason Christy, Principal