



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: Ravalli

DISTRICT: Darby K-12 School District

LIST EACH SCHOOL THAT IS REQUESTING THE VARIANCE: Darby School, Darby Junior High and Darby High 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.**
10.55.601(3)
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.**
Minutes of the February 13, 2017 School Board Meeting are attached. The AdvancED Leadership Team recommended pursuing this variance in 2013. Due to an oversight our initial variance was not renewed, so we are seeking the initial variance again. The Leadership Team includes parents, teachers, administrators, community members and paraprofessionals.
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.**
Unofficial minutes of the February 13, 2017 School Board Meeting are attached. Official minutes will be sent after the March School Board Meeting.
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.**





5. Describe the variance requested.

Due to the rigorous nature of the AdvancED/NWAC accreditation process, Darby School District requests that they be allowed to use the AdvancED/NWAC process in replacement of 10.55.601(3). We see this as a duplication of efforts.

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

It is the mission of the Darby School District to use this variance to promote rigor, equity, student engagement, and depth of knowledge for our students. The objectives are as follows:

1. Utilize a school improvement plan that requires identification of goals for improvement of achievement and instruction.
2. Utilize collaborative learning communities to increase teacher skills in grading and reporting that is based on clear criteria for attainment of knowledge and skills.
3. Continue to develop the use of data to promote growth in student learning, student readiness for the next level, and student success at the next level.
4. Develop a comprehensive student assessment system with local and standard assessments resulting in a range of data about student learning.

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

1. Darby School Teachers will implement lessons aligned to the Common Core Standards 100% of the time, and use Differentiated Instruction 80% of the time as measured by self-assessment and administrator observation.
2. Darby students will exceed the state average in mathematics and reading achievement scores on the 2018 test.
3. Darby students will exceed the state average in reading achievement scores on the 2018 test.
4. Darby's class of 2018 will have at least a 90% graduation rate.
5. District curriculum will be reviewed to ensure compliance with the Montana Common Core on a regular schedule as part of our participation in the Ravalli County Curriculum Consortium.

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

1. Administrator walk-throughs, formal evaluations, peer reviews, and self assessments.
2. Mathematics scores will be gathered from the results of the 2018 Smarter Balance Assessment.
3. Reading scores will be gathered from the results of the 2018 Smarter Balance Assessment.
4. Graduation rate data will be tracked by the cohort through the Office of Public Instruction.
5. By participating in the Ravalli County Curriculum Consortium, our curriculum will be reviewed on a regular schedule to ensure curriculum guides, pacing guides and common assessments are aligned to the Montana Common Core.

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





Darby Schools are regionally accredited through AdvancEd/NWAC. To obtain this accreditation, the schools go through a rigorous process that includes a self-assessment in relation to research based standards and indicators, student performance diagnostics, survey data from parents, teachers, and students as well as an external review from an outside team of educators every five years. An extensive educationally based continuous school improvement process is required from AdvancED indicators 1.3, 3.2, 3.4, 3.8, 3.11, 5.4, and 5.5. A school district education profile is required from AdvancED indicators 5.1, 5.2, 3.2, and 3.6. A description of strategies for assessing student progress is required from AdvancED indicators 3.2 and 5., and a professional development component is required from indicators 2.6, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.7, 3.11, and 5.3. A description of these indicators is attached. With the steps required through the AdvancED process, Darby Schools meets and exceeds 10.55.601(3), therefore duplication of efforts is not needed. Due to the self review and external review required, students will be benefited by vertically and horizontally aligned programs. This process promotes rigor, equity, student engagement and depth of application of knowledge. The school improvement plan requires identification of goals for improvement of achievement and instruction. Teachers participate in collaborative learning communities, and grading and reporting must be based on clear criteria for attainment of knowledge and skills. Finally, Darby Schools must demonstrate, using data, growth in student learning, student readiness for the next level, and student success at the next level.

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

a. Workable.

Darby Schools have sufficient resources for this variance. An annual fee to AdvancED/NWAC is paid which provides all information needed for the standards and indicators, student performance diagnostics, surveys and survey results. The annual fee also includes the AdvancED Adaptive System of School Improvement Support Tools (ASSIST), a state-of-the-art system that allows schools to streamline and enhance their efforts to boost student success. The school also has the opportunity to receive training at the annual AdvancED/NWAC School Improvement Conference.

b. Educationally sound.

The AdvancED/NWAC standards and indicators are research based. The following is from the AdvancED website; "With over a century of work in schools and districts throughout the world, AdvancED collects and manages information that has the potential to revolutionize the way we think about continuous improvement and the factors that have the greatest promise for ensuring student success. For that reason, we have committed to an ambitious 5-year research agenda that will uncover the impact of accreditation on school improvement and student achievement. The objective is to provide the education community with research-based strategies, conditions, and behaviors that lead to transformative school improvement. A research team of academics and practitioners has already published two studies, Learning from Accreditation and District Accreditation: Leveraging Change.

Dedicated to both school and system improvement, we are proud to be able to share our depth of knowledge with the greater educational community. As a knowledge leader in the area of





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education policy and practice, we know our research will not only be a catalyst for positive change, but will transform the way educators approach educational innovation and continuous improvement." (AdvancED website <http://www.advanc-ed.org/schoolimprovement-research>)

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

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

Attached are all AdvancED Standards and Indicators that frame vertical and horizontal alignment for all program offerings required by the Montana Office of Public Instruction.





Required school district signatures:

Board Chair Name: KATE DUGGAN

Board Chair Signature: [Signature] Date: 2/22/17

Superintendent Name: Lloyd D. Remaker

Superintendent Signature: [Signature] Date 2/21/17

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: [Signature] Date 5/15/2017
 Approve Disapprove

Board of Public Education Chair [Signature] Date 5/11/17
 Approve Disapprove



Create a Paraprofessional Position: Ms Burnham Edmunds moved to create a paraprofessional position five hours per day. Mr. Smith seconded and all voted in favor.

Teacher's Retirement Incentive: Ms Burnham Edmunds moved to approve a teacher's retirement incentive for \$15,000 for up to three teachers. Ms Harrell seconded with correction and all voted in favor.

Out of State Trip Approval: Mr. Smith moved to approve the two out of state trips. Ms Harrell seconded and all voted in favor.

1:00 Release Time on March 29: Ms Harrell moved to approve a 1:00 release time on March 29, 2017. Mr. Smith seconded and all voted in favor.

School Board Election Resolution: Ms Harrell moved to approve the school board election resolution with a poll vote. Mr. Smith seconded and all voted in favor.

School Bus Purchase: Ms Harrell moved to approve the purchase of a new route bus. Mr Smith seconded and all voted in favor.

2017/18 School Calendar: Mr. Smith moved to approve the 2017/18 school calendar. Ms Burnham Edmunds seconded and all voted in favor.

Declare January 9, 2017 an Emergency Snow Day: Ms Burnham Edmunds moved to approve declaring January 9, 2017 an emergency snow day. Mr. Smith seconded and all voted in favor.

Add Boys Junior High Tennis for 7th/8th grade: Mr. Smith moved to approve adding boys junior high tennis and making tennis open to 7th and 8th grades. Ms Burnham Edmunds seconded and all voted in favor.

Early Graduation Request: Ms Harrell moved to approve the early graduation request of Donovan Legler. Mr. Smith seconded and all voted in favor.

Budget Amendment Proclamation: Mr. Smith moved to approve the budget amendment proclamation. Ms Harrell seconded and all voted in favor.

Variance To Standards AdvancED: Mr. Smith moved to approve applying for the variance to standards for AdvanED. Ms Harrell seconded and all voted in favor.

Variance To Standards Full Time Superintendent: Ms Harrell moved to approve applying for the variance to standards for the full time superintendent. Mr. Smith seconded and all voted in favor.

Superintendent Report: See attached report.

Adjourn: By a motion duly made the meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm

[Signature] 3/13/17 *[Signature]* 3-13-17
Board Chair Date Clerk Date