



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: Sanders

DISTRICT: #2

LIST EACH SCHOOL THAT IS REQUESTING THE VARIANCE: Thompson Falls Junior High

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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.**
Presented to board of trustees , February 6, 2017. Official minutes will be approved at the March board meeting. Reviewed and discussed with District Leadership Team February 21, 2017.
 - 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.**
Variance has been discussed and considered by administrators in each school, librarians, and paraprofessionals working in library program. The variance has been reviewed with the District Leadership Team and administrative team. Minutes from February 6, 2017 meeting will be attached to request. Our team has demonstrated our ability to meet the needs of our students with this variance. There has been no disruption to service and we are providing quality student library services with a qualified, cohesive library team.





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).**

The District initially requested a variance to meet 10.55.709 requirements for librarian FTE. The .1 FTE requirement has been met with a licensed and properly endorsed librarian and an experienced paraprofessional. For a quantitative measure to track student use we chose the circulation of books. Our goal was to increase the number of books being checked out by 10%. We exceeded our goal and increased our circulation by 84% in the junior high. Our elementary school is closely related and also increased their circulation by 31%.

- 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.**

Our librarians tracked the circulation of fiction and non-fiction books for each library in the District. We established a baseline record for the initial application and pulled a report for the following year, and are tracking the current year. Our circulation has increased in each library, E.S. 31%, J.H. 84%, H.S. 56%.

- 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).**

Continued emphasis on the value of reading across the curriculum. Celebrating success in reading and encouraging students to use our library resources. Continued teamwork between librarians and staff. These items will be accomplished through staff meetings and in-service training. Through professional development, supervision, and evaluation the District will continue to emphasize meeting the state program delivery standards in each of our libraries.

(Use check boxes provided in items 6-11 if the information requested remains unchanged from the initial variance application.)

6. Describe the renewal variance requested.

- Renewal variance is the same as the initial variance.*

The renewal variance is the same as the initial variance. We have an elementary school of 200 students requiring .5 FTE, a junior high with 62 students requiring .1 FTE, and a high school with 170 students requiring .5 FTE. For a total of 1.1 FTE required for the District. Hiring a .1 FTE librarian is not practical for our District; therefore we request 1FTE be permitted to cover our District with the assistance of other school personnel.

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





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- Mission and goals are the same as the initial variance.*

The mission is the same as the original. The goal is to monitor student use of our library resources and maintain our increased level of circulation. The librarian's and administration will monitor library use and encourage students and staff to utilize these resources in order to meet the academic needs of all students. Librarians, administration, and classroom teachers will continue to meet in a team format to evaluate library services.

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

- Measurable objects are the same as the initial variance.*

Our District has taken this variance beyond circulation and emphasized reading as our top academic priority. We will continue to provide student access to library services and promote reading in our District and believe it is essential to our vision statement, "Everything Revolves Around Learning". The Library team in Thompson Falls will continue to provide a continued emphasis on reading across the curriculum, and monitor use both quantitatively through book check out and qualitatively through supervision. The J.H. library will monitor the number of books being checked out of the library quarterly and maintain the increased circulation that has resulted from the efforts outlined in our variance.

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

- Data or evidence gathered in the same manner as the initial variance.*

Data will be gathered in the same manner as the initial variance. We will use our book checkout software to provide data on the number of fiction and non-fiction books being checked out from our libraries and communicate the information to building and district administration.

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

- The renewal variance will meet the specific needs of the students in the same manner as the initial variance.*

The renewal variance will meet the specific needs of the students in the same manner as the initial variance.

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

a. Workable.

- Renewal variance is the same as the initial variance.*

Renewal variance is the same as the initial variance. Our District has demonstrated the workability of this variance by achieving set goals.

b. Educationally sound.

- Renewal variance is the same as the initial variance.*





Renewal variance is the same as the initial variance. Increasing circulation by communicating reading as a cross curricular priority and connecting the role of the library with classroom teachers is grounded in professional learning communities and modern educational pedagogy.

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

Renewal variance is the same as the initial variance.

Renewal variance is the same as the initial variance.

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

Renewal variance is the same as the initial variance.

Renewal variance is the same as the initial variance.



Required school district signatures:

Board Chair Name: Mindi N. Wilson

Board Chair Signature: [Signature]

Date: 2-22-2017

Superintendent Name: Jason J. Slater

Superintendent Signature: [Signature]

Date: 2-22-2017

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



BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES OF THE MEETING

February 6, 2017 at 6:00 p.m., Board Conference Room

The regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of Thompson Falls School District #2 was called to order by Chairman Mindi Wilson at 6:00 pm with Trustees Ryan Frields, Sandra Muster, Jeff Lundberg and Abby Harnett. Also present were Superintendent Jason Slater, Principals Don Jensen, and Len Dorscher and District Clerk Rita Huebschman. Visitors present are listed on the attached list.

The Pledge of allegiance was recited by all.

A motion was made by Jeff Lundberg to approve the agenda and seconded by Abby Harnett. All members were in favor.

Sandra Muster moved to approve the minutes from the January 1, 2017 meeting as presented, Ryan Frields seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Mr. Slater opened the meeting with the superintendent's report noting that the first semester of the school year had ended and the second half is underway. Student enrollment is stable at the moment in the elementary school and increased in the high school by about seventeen (17) students. A copy of the current student population with accreditation standards is included with the minutes of the meeting. Mr. Slater gave a short presentation on the impact of the student population on school funding. He also presented a four year comparison on the general fund budget noting the variation in the budgets from FY14 to FY18 averaged about ½ percent.

Mr. Slater mentioned that the board policy training meetings have been valuable information for the trustees. The athletic programs are gearing up for the tournaments and there are three adult education classes in progress, namely weight training, co-ed basketball/ physical fitness and country line dancing.

Principal Don Jensen presented events taking place at the high school namely the robotics team and their participation at the state qualifier in Belgrade in January and then on to the state FTC tournament in Bozeman. The competitions were good training for building relationships and developing professional skills. Mr. Jensen gave a handout listing the second quarter high school honor roll, and another on the individual and team scores at the Western B-C Divisional Wrestling Tournament in Arlee. The HS will hold its first ski trip of the season at lookout pass next week on Monday. The remodeling of the science lab in room 15 is finished, Mrs. Thilmony now has a working lab for chemistry and physics. Pictures were passed around of the new lab. The HS has completed the MAP testing.

Mr. Dorscher presented the Jr. High report for Mrs. Dickson. He talked about the MAP testing and the teachers are pleased with the scores and efforts of students. He mentioned the Geography Bee, the chess matches the JH winter Olympics, the 7th and 8th grade reading achievements, JH wrestling, and girls' basketball.

Moving on to the Elementary School report Mr. Dorscher felt the Family Art and Literacy Night was quite successful, along with the student council bake sale. Elementary students also attended the state robotics competition in Bozeman. The ski trip is rescheduled for March 3rd. MAP testing is complete

and results will be available soon. Fourth grade will be taking NAEP assessments in reading, science and math on February 9th. A presentation on wilderness and bears will be held on February 10 for grades 6-8. The kindergarten roundup will be held in March. Dates to be announced.

The District hosted an educational consultant for an in-service training on positive peer interaction and bully prevention. Mr. Slater also presented information and a handout on the key points on the OPI Assessment and Data Conference in Missoula 2017. Some of the major points were types of assessments, the AVA, accessibility options, the digital library and new reporting features. The district sent a team of teachers to attend this conference.

Mr. Slater announced that Mr. Holleran is resigning as the junior high athletic director and Mr. Slater recommended the board accept Mr. Holleran's letter of resignation. After considering the size of the district, enrollments, finances, Mr. Holleran's position will be absorbed by the administration. Mr. Dorscher has agreed to fulfill the duties and supervision of events as K8 principal. Jeff Lundberg made a motion to accept Mr. Holleran's resignation with much regret and deep appreciation for his service, Sandra Muster seconded the motion also with regret and appreciation. The vote was unanimous.

A discussion was held on ANB or Average Number Belonging which is the number used to determine the largest portion of school funding on an annual basis. It is established by averaging two student counts during the year. Although the counts are close to the 3 year average in the districts, it continues to be a challenge to maintain close monitoring and remain flexible with the staff.

The calendar committee has developed three calendars to present to the board. Mr. Slater recommended the board select two and submit to the staff for a vote and officially approve a calendar at the March meeting. The discussion was long and involved and after looking at the differences in calendars, the options that would meet the needs of teachers, students and parents, the board voted 2 votes for the hybrid calendar and calendar no. 2, and 3 votes for the hybrid calendar and calendar no. 1. The hybrid calendar and calendar no. 1 will be presented to the staff for their input.

Mr. Jensen submitted his letter of resignation and it is with deep respect and gratitude for his 21 years of service that Mr. Slater recommends the board accept the letter of resignation from Mr. Don Jensen. The District will begin a search for a new Principal this week. The position will be posted internally and externally in accordance with the District's hiring practice. The motion to accept Mr. Jensen's resignation with much regret and appreciation was made by Jeff Lundberg and seconded by Sandra Muster.

Mr. Slater made the recommendation to renew elementary principal Len Dorscher's contract. Mr. Dorscher is a solid administrator and continues to exercise his excellent leadership skills. Mr. Slater recommend Mr. Dorscher's contract be renewed with an increase of 1.5% for the next FY 2018. Jeff Lundberg made the motion to renew Principal Dorscher's contract with a 1.5% increase. Ryan Fields seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Mr. Holleran made the recommendation to hire Mike Thilmony as junior high wrestling coach at (7% of the 2016-17 base, or \$2,023). This stipend replaces the previous Little Guy Wrestling stipend and will not add additional expense to the district. A motion was made by Ryan Fields and seconded by Jeff Lundberg to hire Mike Thilmony as wrestling coach.

The state of Montana requires 1.1FTE to meet the elementary, junior high and high school library accreditation standards. The district requested a variance to standards in 2015 which meets the

library needs with 1 certified FTE. Mr. Slater is requesting that the board approve the District variance to standards application: 10.55.605 Library Media Specialist FTE. Abby Harnett made the motion to approve the renewal of the variance, Sandra Muster seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Mr. Slater recommended the board adopt a corporate resolution to remove Gayle Munson's name as a signer on the HS student activity account number 2445 with Montana Educators Credit Union and add Rita Huebschman as the authorized signer. Ryan Fields moved to adopt the resolution, Sandra Muster seconded. All were in favor.

Mr. Slater made the recommendation to approve the financial report and pay the bills. Sandra Muster moved to approve the report and pay bills, Jeff Lundberg seconded.

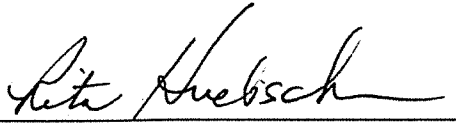
The next board meeting of the Thompson Falls School District will be held on Monday, March 13, 2017 at 6:00 pm in the board conference room.

The meeting was recessed at 7:25 p.m. for an executive session to discuss Superintendent Slater's evaluation.

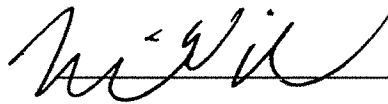
The executive session adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

The board meeting reconvened to adjourn at 8:30 p.m.

— Respectfully Submitted



Rita Huebschman, Clerk



Mindi Wilson, Chair