

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 variance to an assurance standard or a section of assurance 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 DATE

First semester implementation; second Monday in October

COUNTY:

DISTRICT:

LIST EACH SCHOOL THAT IS REQUESTING THE VARIANCE:

227 Middle and High School Academy

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 Specialist- .001 FTE for 227 Middle School Charter and .001 FTE for 227 High School Charter.

2. Describe the variance requested.

Request for Variance: Both East Helena 227 Middle School Charter and East Helena 227 High School Charter are seeking a variance from Standard 10.55.709. This standard requires schools with fewer than 126 students to maintain a minimum staffing of 0.001 FTE (full-time equivalent) per student.

Current Enrollment:

East Helena 227 Middle School Charter: The current enrollment is 23 students.

East Helena 227 High School Charter: The current enrollment is 48 students.

FTE Calculations:

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

a. Workable.

Shared Media Specialists: By utilizing the media specialists from East Valley Middle School (EVMS) and East Helena High School (EHHS), students at both schools benefit equally from the resources and support provided by these specialists.

Student Enrollment at EVMS: EVMS has 477 students, which requires one full-time equivalent (FTE) media specialist. The 23 227 Middle School students are served by the EVMS 1.0 FTE librarian which is still below the threshold of 501 students.

Student Enrollment at EHHS: EHHS has 583 students. This enrollment supports 1.5 FTE media specialists. The 48 227 High School students are served by the EHHS 1.5 FTE librarians which falls within the range of 501 to 1000.

Total Media Specialists: Together, both schools have a total of 2.5 FTE media specialists, ensuring that all students' needs are met for the Academy's despite the varying enrollment numbers.

This setup allows for effective media support across both schools, maximizing resources based on student population.

b. Educationally sound.

Our media specialists are all licensed professionals under Montana Licensure, ensuring that our students receive high-quality support. We recognize the need for a 0.001 media specialist to support our additional 227 Academies.

In the interim, we believe our current media specialists can effectively fulfill these roles until we are able to hire an additional specialist. This approach allows us to maintain our commitment to providing comprehensive media services while we work toward expanding our team.

c. Designed to meet or exceed results under established standards.

We believe we are effectively exceeding our educational standards for our Academy by providing a dedicated media specialist for our students within the FTE framework. This approach allows us to enhance the learning experience without the need to increase our FTE count at the 227 Middle and High School Academy charter schools.

By integrating a media specialist into our existing staffing model, we ensure that our students receive specialized support in media literacy, research skills, and access to diverse resources. This strategy not only enriches their educational journey but also maintains the high qualified teacher.

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

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 that provides evidence that local school community stakeholders were involved in the consideration and development of the proposed variance to an assurance standard or a section of assurance standards.**
(Stakeholder groups include trustees, administrators, teachers, classified school staff, families, community members, and students as applicable.)

Will be submitted in after approval at the November 11, 2024 board meeting.

Required school district signatures:

Board Chair Name: Scott Walter

Board Chair Signature: Scott A. Walter Date: Oct. 14, 2024

Superintendent Name: Dan Rispens

Superintendent Signature: [Signature] Date 10-14-24

Email the signed form to:

OPIAccred@mt.gov

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES, EAST HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 9

Call to Order: Trustees of School District No. 9 held a meeting on October 14, 2024. Chairman Scott Walter called the meeting to order at 5:31 pm.

Attendance and Introduction of Board Members

Trustees Present: Chairman Scott Walter, Vice Chair Tyrel Murfitt, Stacy Baird, Tristan Ulmer, Martin Balukas (@5:33), and Mark Diehl (@ 5:35)

Superintendent Dan Rispens, Clerk Jill Hoogerheide, Athletics Director Shaun Murgel, Student Representative Brooke Harris, and Tech Coordinator Eric Power

Building Admin: Michael Kemper, Lynsi Morris, Trish Klock, Gus Somerfeld, Shaun Murgel, Paul Condon and Brandon Crusat

Visitors: Kate Johnson, Rebecca Bergman, Tamika Schoppe, K.D. Jones, Vashti Teders, Stewart St. Clair, Kari Speicher, Zachary Steward, Bridgit LeVie, Ashton Berg, Aric Curtiss, Vince Bray, Carrie Clement, Dani Mitchell, Mary Smith, Rachael Bray

Review the Agenda

No comments

Hear the Public

No comments

Reports

Student Report

Brooke Harris reported to the Board about Homecoming week. She spoke about dress up day, Homecoming parade, the volleyball and the football game. The Homecoming dance was on Saturday and she felt like most had a great time.

Administrator Reports

Radley Elementary Principal Gus Somerfeld wanted to add on to his Board report about the Olweas Bully Prevention kick off in a couple weeks. The subcommittee has met a couple times already to plan some events to help with energy and positivity to get buy in from the students. He wanted to make sure the Board was aware that he has submitted an updated behavior report.

Eastgate and Prickly Pear Elementary Principal Brandon Crusat wanted to talk about the Donuts with Grownups event that took place at Eastgate last Friday. PPE will have one this coming Wednesday. They had great turnout and felt like it was hugely beneficial.

EVMS Principal Lynsi Morris spoke about some of the upcoming sports. The Admin are “flowing with evals” and everything is moving smoothly.

EVMS Vice Principal Michael Kemper spoke about a great idea that came from his Instructional Coach. They suggested using a universal tracking system for behavior reports. All the students and staff have access and can track warnings across the school day to help everyone cut down on repeats and allow the students to realize that they are being tracked. The majority of problems and behavioral warnings seem to be from one grade level. The team is continually working on ways to mitigate the number of incidences.

EHHS Principal Paul Condon reported about Homecoming and the dance which he believes went well. The Admin team are meeting to talk about approving procedures.

EHHS Vice Principal Trish Klock highlighted the graph in the Board report about office referrals. She felt like a majority of students are not having any referrals and the team feels like all of their proactive approaches have helped a lot. The Vigilante Star program received a Booster Club donation to help with incentive items. She feels like this has been very successful and many students have received the award so far. The Healthy Youth Development Program is under way with the Afterschool Tutoring Program starting soon.

Athletic Director Shaun Murgel reported about the District’s Fall sports and that they will be over in a couple weeks. Facility use is a work in progress and he feels like things have been going well with scheduling. He also wanted to talk about realigning some of the football games to get the teams home earlier. He elicited responses from several other A.D.s to get their opinion and he felt like most were on board with the realignment.

Superintendent Rispens introduced Eric Power the District’s New Technology Coordinator.

Trustee and Committee Reports of the K-12 Board

Chairman Walter solicited reports from the Trustees and Committees.

Chairman Walter shared MTSBA is focusing on MCEL this week so there have not been a lot of meetings. The COSBA Executive Director is resigning effective the end of June 2025. There is a nationwide search for a new Executive Director. Chairman Walter is on the hiring committee.

No other reports from the Committees and Trustees.

Strategic Planning – Scan for Future Needs

Chairman Walter solicited comments and observations regarding the current strategic plan and planning needs.

Superintendent Rispens shared about the disparity in the High School student count from last month. He wanted to also talk about the Habitat for Humanity event that he attended. He encouraged people to read the write-up about it. There was discussion about the naming of the project and fundraising plans. He also wanted the Board to know that there was a request from the community to have students picked up at Aaron Creek instead of Canyon Ferry Road which the district is reviewing.

Notifications of Retirements and Resignations

The Following Staff Resignations Have Previously Been Accepted:

- Ella Emmons Paraprofessional
- Kaydee Strum Head Cook
- Anthony Stenberg Bus Driver

Consent Action Items

Minutes of the Regular Meeting, September 9, 2024

Approval of the former and new warrants (Claims # 50347 - 50441) and (Payroll #66817 - #67006)

Personnel Actions

Recommendation of Employment:

- Andrew Mazanec Tiger Program HS Aid
- Bridger Clark Tiger Program HS Aid
- Anthony Horner Tiger Program Site Coordinator
- Molly Moore Assistant Speech & Debate Coach
- Tanya Hauk Concessions Stand Manager
- Christina Broadhurst Paraprofessional
- ~~Jan Cookson EVMS Volley Ball Coach~~
- Melinda Yeary Tiger Program Substitute
- Anna Reiff Tiger Program Substitute
- Eric Power Technology Coordinator
- Jordan Zoekler EHHS At-Risk Tutor
- Randall Gillett Substitute
- Gracie Olds ASL Interpreter
- Marques Davis Paraprofessional
- Alyssa Oakes EVMS Volleyball Coach
- Zerich Richerson Asst Wrestling Coach
- Kevin Dighans Asst Wrestling Coach

East Helena School District Students Requesting Enrollment in Other School Districts for the 2024-2025 School Year

	<u>Helena</u>	<u>Jefferson High</u>	<u>Montana City</u>	<u>Clancy</u>
MM (PreK)	1			
Kindergarten				
1 st grade	2			
2 nd grade	3			
3 rd grade	2			
4 th grade				
5 th grade	2			
6 th grade	2			
7 th grade	1			
8 th grade	2			
9 th grade	3			
10 th grade	5			
11 th grade	7			
12 th grade	6			

Total: 36

Trustee Baird asked to pull the Personnel Actions to speak about Jan Cookson who is only a volunteer and not a Volleyball coach.

Motion by Vice Chair Murfitt, seconded by Trustee Ulmer to approve the consent action items without personnel actions as presented. Unanimous vote for the motion. The motion carries.

Motion by Vice Chair Murfitt, seconded by Trustee Baird to approve the personnel actions as amended to not include Jan Cookson. Unanimous vote for the motion. The motion carries.

Unfinished Business

EPA Rebate and Lion Bus Update

Superintendent Rispens updated the Board regarding the Clean School Bus Rebate Program and our progress with Lion Electric including the status of our current Lion bus.

Enrollment Report

Superintendent Rispens shared details about Fall enrollment trends and counts.

MCEL Updates and Information

Superintendent Rispens shared details of the upcoming MCEL conference in Missoula.

New Business

Consideration of EHHS Head Wrestling Coach

Superintendent Rispens recommended Tim Baird for the position of Head Wrestling Coach at EHHS.

Trustee Baird removed herself from voting due to nepotism rules.

Trustee Ellermeyer joined via Zoom at 6:20 p.m. for the vote.

Motion by Trustee Diehl, seconded by Trustee Ulmer to approve hiring Tim Baird for the EHHS head Wrestling Coach position. Unanimous vote for the motion. The motion carries.

Calendar Committee Report

The Committees presented their findings regarding a 4-day school week. Paul Condon stressed that this was only informational tonight and that there would be surveys going out to the families to get their feedback.

Stewart St. Clair expressed his concerns with the 4-day school week.

Aric Curtiss asked some clarifying questions for the Committees regarding the 4-day school week.

Vince Bray asked some clarifying questions for the Committees regarding the 4-day school week.

Dani Mitchell asked some clarifying questions for the Committees regarding the 4-day school week.

Mary Smith had some questions regarding the 4-day school week.

Consideration of Variance to Standards Request – 227 Academy

Superintendent Rispens reported that the District is short of accreditation standards for our librarians in our 227 Academies and is requesting a variance for accreditation purposes.

Motion by Trustee Diehl, seconded by Trustee Balukas to approve the Variance to Standards request. Unanimous vote for the motion. The motion carries.

Consideration of Strategic Plan Language Addition

Superintendent Rispens reported that bargaining team committees and EHEA had some recommended changes to the language in the Strategic Plan regarding student/teacher load.

Motion by Trustee Baird, seconded by Vice Chair Murfitt to approve the strategic plan as presented. Unanimous vote for the motion. The motion carries.

Resolution #238 – Obsolete and Unusable Equipment

Superintendent Rispens asked for approval to properly dispose of the items listed in the resolution.

Motion by Vice Chair Murfitt, seconded by Trustee Baird to approve Resolution #238. Unanimous vote for the motion. The motion carries.

New Student Activity Account – Pride and Allies Club

Superintendent Rispens reported that the club has done some fundraising and needs an account for deposit of their funds.

Motion by Trustee Balukas, seconded by Trustee Diehl to approve the Pride and Allies Student Activity Fund. Unanimous vote for the motion. The motion carries.

EHHS Travel Club Request

The EHHS Travel Club shared details of their planned trip overseas in the Summer of 2025 to London, Paris, Rome and Florence.

Motion by Trustee Balukas , seconded by Vice Chair Murfitt to approve the travel request for Summer 2025. Unanimous vote for the motion. The motion carries.

EHHS Choir Travel Request

Superintendent Rispens reported that EHHS Choir is requesting to travel in 2025.

Ms. Schoppe, Ashton Burg and Zachary Steward spoke to the Board about their plans to attend the Vancouver Heritage Festival in Vancouver, WA in May 2025.

Motion by Trustee Ulmer, seconded by Trustee Diehl to approve the Choir travel request in 2025. Unanimous vote for the motion. The motion carries.

Consideration of Home Support Services Contract with Intermountain Children’s Home

Superintendent Rispens shared that we would like to update our relationship with ICH by signing a contract for on site mental health services for EHPS students and a transition to the HSS delivery model.

Motion by Vice Chair Murfitt, seconded by Trustee Baird to approve the contract with Intermountain Children’s Home. Unanimous vote for the motion. The motion carries.

Policy Review First Reading Policies #2309, #2314, and #3630

- 2309 School Library Program

Motion by Trustee Balukas, seconded by Trustee Baird to adopt policy 2309 on first reading. Unanimous vote for the motion. The motion carries.

- 2314 Instructional or Library Material Review

Motion by Trustee Baird, seconded by Trustee Diehl to approve the language of policy 2314 on first reading.

Motion by Chairman Walter, seconded by Vice Chair Murfitt to amend policy 2314 to include the language under line item 21 "or a student enrolled in the District may". Unanimous vote for the motion. The motion carries.

- 3630 Cell Phones and Other Electronic Equipment

Motion by Trustee Baird, seconded by Trustee Balukas to approve option 2 under policy 3630 on first reading. Unanimous vote for the motion. The motion carries.

Dani Mitchell commented about the use of cell phones in the schools.

METG Meeting Annual Notice

Superintendent Rispens let the Board and public know that the trust has scheduled their annual public meeting for November 6th at 6:00 p.m. There is a virtual option available.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Future Meeting Dates and Agenda Items

The next regular meeting will be held on Monday, November 11, 2024 @ 5:30 EVMS

Submitted by: Jill Hoogerheide
Board Clerk, Jill Hoogerheide

11/11/24
Date

Approved by: Scott A. Walter
Chairman, Board of Trustees

Nov. 11, 2024
Date