

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:

Frenchtown Bronc Fast Track Public Charter 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.

10.55.709 Assignment of Library Media Specialist

2. Describe the variance requested.

10.55.709 Assignment of Library Media Specialist states schools with a student enrollment of 251-500 students shall require 1.0 FTE Library Media Specialist. Frenchtown Bronc Fast Track Public charter requests a variance to this standard.

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

a. Workable.

The proposed variance for the Frenchtown Bronc Fast Track Public Charter is workable for several reasons:

First, because Bronc Fast Track students are housed within Frenchtown High School, they will have full access to the school's resources, including the library, materials, and the librarian support. This access ensures Bronc Fast Track students can benefit from the same academic and research resources as other students, maintaining consistency in education quality across both programs.

Second, with a combined enrollment of 412 students (53 from the Bronc Fast Track Public Charter and 359 From Frenchtown High School), the student body housed within the school falls within the 251-500 range, which necessitates a full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) Library Media Specialist according to Chapter 55 staffing requirements. The Frenchtown School District does employ 1.0 FTE Library Media Specialist housed in the Frenchtown High School. This allocation ensures adequate support for all students and facilitates a smooth integration of both student groups within the school's existing structure.

By leveraging shared resources and aligning curriculum standards, the proposed variance will meet established Chapter 55 requirements while providing necessary support for both Bronc Fast Track and Frenchtown High School students.

b. Educationally sound.

The proposed variance is educationally sound because it ensures equitable access to essential resources and support for all students, including those in the Bronc Fast Track program. High School and Fast Track students share the same librarian, who provides consistent supervision and guidance. In fact, Bronc Fast Track students complete their online college courses through Missoula College within the library, supervised by the librarian, ensuring they have direct support for their higher-level academic endeavors.

All students operate within the established framework of the Frenchtown High School Library, benefiting from the same organizational structure and resources. This includes access to library materials, technology devices like Chromebooks, printers, 3D printers, desktop computers, and internet connectivity. By utilizing shared resources, the variance promotes academic success, technological literacy, and research skills equally for both student populations, reinforcing the educational integrity of the program.

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

The variance is designed to meet or exceed established standards by efficiently combining the Frenchtown Bronc Fast Track Public Charter students with Frenchtown High School students within the same library system. With a total combined enrollment of 412 students, the student body remains well within the range (251-500 students) that requires a 1.0 FTE Library Media Specialist.

This alignment ensures that the librarian can effectively meet the needs of all students, providing equal access to resources, technology, and academic support. By maintaining compliance with staffing requirements and ensuring full access to library services for both groups, the variance not only adheres to established standards but also fosters a well-supported learning environment that is conducive to academic success for all students.

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

N/A

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.)

Required school district signatures:

Board Chair Name: Debbie Lester

Board Chair Signature: *Debbie J. Lester* Date: 10-9-2024

Superintendent Name: Les Meyer

Superintendent Signature: *L. Meyer* Date 10/14/24

Email the signed form to:

OPIAccred@mt.gov

Assignment of School Administrators, Library Media Specialist, and School Counselor FTE

10.55.704 Assignment of District Superintendents

System FTE Licensed Staff	Required Superintendent FTE
14.00 or fewer	May use a supervising teacher and the services of the county superintendent to satisfy administrator requirements.
14.01-17.99	Minimum of .10 FTE superintendent. One individual may serve as both superintendent and principal.
18.00-30.99	Minimum of .5 FTE. One individual may serve as both superintendent and principal.
31.00 or more	1.0 FTE

10.55.705 Assignment of School Administrators/Principals

Student Enrollment	Required Principal FTE
1-124 students with <i>9 or fewer</i> licensed staff in school system	NO FTE Required
1-124 students with <i>more than 9</i> licensed staff in school system	Prorated FTE ($.002 \times \text{student enrollment}$)
125-174	.25 FTE
175-249	.50 FTE
250-549	1.0 FTE
550-1049	2.0 FTE
1050-1549	3.0 FTE
1550-2049	4.0 FTE
2050 or more	5.0 FTE

10.55.709 Assignment of Library Media Specialist

District Student Enrollment	Required Library Media Specialist FTE
School district less than 126 students	May employ or contract with Library Media Specialist, or utilize a consortium, multidistrict agreement, or interlocal cooperative.
School Student Enrollment	
1-125	Minimum of .001 FTE
126-250	.50 FTE
251-500	1.0 FTE
501-1000	1.5 FTE
1001-1500	2.0 FTE
1501-2000	2.5 FTE
2001 or more	3.0 FTE

10.55.710 Assignment of School Counseling Staff

District Student Enrollment	Required School Counselor FTE
School district less than 126 students	May employ or contract with School Counselor, or utilize a consortium, multidistrict agreement, or interlocal cooperative.
School Student Enrollment	
All student enrollment levels	Ratio of 1.0 FTE per 400 students ($.0025 \times \text{student enrollment}$)





Les Meyer <lesmeyer@ftbroncs.org>

Fast Track Variance request

1 message

Jake Haynes <JakeHaynes@ftbroncs.org>
To: DL-Highschool <dl-highschool@ftsd.org>

Wed, Oct 2, 2024 at 9:37 AM

Staff,

In order to meet all accreditation standards for the Frenchtown Bronc Fast Track Public Charter we are applying for a variance to the standard of required Library Media Specialist. Part of the application says to inform staff of the application. If you want to read the entire application you are welcome to do so but in short this is my explanation on question number 1- Of why this is a workable solution---

The proposed variance for is workable for several reasons. First, students enrolled in the Bronc Fast Track Public Charter School will accrue credits from both the specialized Fast Track curriculum and standard high school courses. This dual enrollment ensures that students meet the necessary academic standards and graduation requirements set by Frenchtown High School. Second, because Bronc Fast Track students are housed within Frenchtown High School, they will have full access to the school's resources, including the library, materials, and librarian support. This access ensures that Fast Track students can benefit from the same academic and research resources as other students, maintaining consistency in educational quality across both programs. Furthermore, with a combined enrollment of 412 students (53 from Bronc Fast Track and 359 from Frenchtown High School), the student body falls within the 251-500 range, which necessitates a full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) Library Media Specialist according to staffing requirements. This allocation ensures adequate support for all students and facilitates a smooth integration of both student groups within the school's existing structure.

Jake Haynes
Frenchtown High School Principal



Frenchtown School Board of Trustees Meeting
October 9, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. – Special School Board Meeting
Middle School Administrative Conference Room

- I. **Call to Order:** Board Chair Debbie Lester called the Special School Board Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Trustees in attendance were Jami Romney FitzGerald, Rainier Batt, Dennis Normand, Holli Rankin and Noah Peters. Also in attendance were Superintendent Les Meyer, Principals Jake Haynes, Aaron Griffin and Riley Devins, Assistant Principal Beth Terzo, Activities Director Eli Field, Special Services Coordinator Jennifer Demmons and District Clerk Shauna Anderson.
- II. **Pledge of Allegiance**
The meeting opened with the pledge at 6:00 p.m.
- III. **Public Comment Period (for non-agenda items):** none
- IV. **Review/Action: Approve Variance to Standards – Library Media Specialist – Bronc Fast Track Public Charter School**
Superintendent Les Meyer discussed the new public charter school program as being new to district's, the Board of Public Education and the Office of Public Instruction. Through trainings, it was determined that the Bronc Fast Track Public Charter School may need a variance to standards regarding the Library Media Specialist position. The standard for the charter school enrollment level would be .001 FTE for the Library Media Specialist. The District would apply for a variance because the combined enrollment in the Bronc Fast Track and Frenchtown High School currently has 1.0 FTE Library Media support. This falls within accreditation standards and the students are housed within Frenchtown High School and have access to all school resources. Holli Rankin made a motion to approve the variance to standards of the .001 FTE Library Media Specialist. Noah Peters seconded the motion. Public discussion – none. Board discussion – regarding how the Bronc Fast Track and FHS are considered the same entity by MHSA. Unanimous.
- V. **Review/Action: Approve Hiring**
Superintendent Les Meyer recommended the hiring of part-time Custodian Treva Madonna. Dennis Normand made a motion to approve the hire as recommended. Jami Romney FitzGerald seconded the motion. Public discussion – none. Board discussion – none. Unanimous.
- VI. **Information/Discussion: Policy 3310 Tiered Discipline System**
Board Chair Debbie Lester indicated that the District has an existing policy 3310. This discussion is an additional tiered system that covers drugs and alcohol. Superintendent Les Meyer discussed the tiered system review process, the numerous re-writes and committee meetings that have occurred. The idea behind the policy was to look at progressive discipline from a consequence standpoint and add an educational component. Chair Lester asked for discussion on the draft as included in the meeting materials. Chair Lester began the discussion with concerns that the policy as written would be difficult to administer and manage, and does not include other offenses such as weapons or violence. Principal Jake Haynes indicated this policy is an addendum and specific to drugs, alcohol and tobacco. There is already a tiered system of discipline in the handbook. This addendum creates concerns about the educational component and confidentiality. Assistant Principal Beth Terzo and Special Services Coordinator Jennifer Demmons discussed concerns with regard to special education students and how this policy could be in conflict with special education law as written. Discussion was held regarding special education discipline requirements, the frequency of discipline with students with an IEP or 504 and the reasons for the concerns. Further discussion was held regarding the tiered system severity and how to develop this in the best interest of all students, addressing the importance of keeping students in school as well as protecting students from those in violation of the policy. Many variables were discussed in detail, considering parent choice and possible flexibility for administration. Also discussed was the SRO involvement in discipline and how the existing tiered system is currently operating. Chair Lester would like to take this discussion back to the policy committee to develop a document to be approved by the whole board.

Public discussion – community member Crystal Leishman was invited to speak to the board about this policy discussion. Ms. Leishman felt the education component of this policy is crucial and does not agree with long suspensions. Ms. Leishman feels the existing policy is too vague and students need to understand the consequences for these offenses. She appreciated the consideration of this policy addition knowing it would be a process to develop, and feels this should continue to be a priority for the District. Chair Lester indicated that education must be a critical piece of this policy and the goal of the board will be to expedite a resolution.

VII. Information/Discussion: Policy 3510 School Sponsored Activities

Activities Director Eli Field discussed this policy which addresses 8th grade participation in high school activities. This policy has been in place for a year and so far, it is working well. FHS programs are healthy now, but there may be a time when 8th grade participation will assist FHS in meeting scheduling responsibilities. The District policy on 8th grade participation is the most restrictive among area schools. AD Field asked for clarification language that after the district has identified a need to allow participation, it would then be up to the coaching staff to decide how these students will participate.

Discussion was held regarding the reason for this policy review. Board Chair Debbie Lester indicated that the previous chair asked that the policy be reviewed after a year of being in affect. Further discussion was held on clarifying the coach’s ability to make decisions regarding participation levels. AD Field stated the language could state that once an 8th grader is allowed to participate, the coach decides their role in the program. The program was discussed in detail, including the impact on upperclassmen, competitive varsity programs, and what surrounding schools are allowing. AD Field indicated that the FHS policy is good and handles need well, clarified the “Phenom” clause, and indicated that 8th grade participation is allowed only to field full programs. Trustee Noah Peters is opposed to any high school student being cut because of this policy. The current policy states that this will not happen. Superintendent Les Meyer discussed two sentences in the policy that could be clarified and discussion was held on improving this language. Further discussion was held regarding the need to clarify that coaches have the discretion to decide the role of the students participating in the program.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

ADJOURNED 7:14 p.m.

Approved: _____

Respectfully Submitted,

Board Chair

District Clerk

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Approved: November 19, 2024

Respectfully Submitted,


Board Chair


District Clerk