

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:

Gallatin County, LaMotte Elementary 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.

10.55.902 (4) (c) (ii) BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAM: JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL, 7TH AND 8TH GRADE PROGRAM, OR MIDDLE SCHOOL.

10.55.1201 ARTS PROGRAM DELIVERY STANDARDS

2. Describe the variance requested.

We are requesting a variance to of Standard of 10.55.902 (4) (c) (ii) & 10.55.1201 due to being unable to hire anyone for our current music program due to both lack of applicants and budgetary restrictions. The variance would alter the Jr. High program which uses unit based credits and are looking to use the middle school model.

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

a. Workable.

We can use the salary reserved for the .2FTE teaching position to fund the open music position. We have a music curriculum along with instruments and a classroom for the class.

b. Educationally sound.

NA

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


While we continue to search for a candidate for our music position, we will continue to use the MT Music Standards to guide our instruction. The 7th/8th grade students have 2 sections of music appreciation in their schedule that meet the required minutes.

- d. Where applicable, aligned with program standards under ARM 10.55.1101 through 10.55.2101.
10.55.1201 ARTS PROGRAM DELIVERY STANDARDS

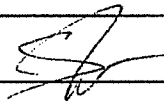
4. **Attach Board of Trustee meeting minutes that show the Board of Trustees adopted the application for a variance at an official, properly noticed meeting that provides evidence that local school community stakeholders were involved in the consideration and development of the proposed variance to an 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: Marci Torres

Board Chair Signature:  Date: 10/9/24

Superintendent Name: Spencer Johnson

Superintendent Signature:  Date: 10/10/24

Email the signed form to:

OPIAccred@mt.gov

**MINUTES
LAMOTTE SCHOOL DISTRICT 43
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
REGULAR MEETING
October 9, 2024 5:00 p.m.**

The regular meeting of the Board of Trustees, LaMotte School District #43 was held September 18, 2024 at LaMotte School for the purpose of considering business to come before the Board of Trustees. Board Chair Torres called the meeting to order at **5:08 p.m.**

Trustees Present: Marci Torres, Alex Prentiss, Lauren Oakes, Kasey Cummings

Trustees Not Present: Brad Hammerquist

Staff Present: Spencer Johnson-Principal/Superintendent, Leah Nusse-Administrative Assistant/District Clerk, Tanya Roberts, Business Manager

Public Present: Approximately 0 community members

Call to Order

Pledge of Allegiance

Presiding Trustees Explanation of Procedures

Recognition of visitors and visitor protocol to be followed when addressing the Board.

Minutes of Previous Meetings

- August 20, 2024 Regular Meeting

Board Discussion: Trustees reviewed the minutes of the September 18, 2024 Regular Meeting.

Motion to approve the minutes of the September 18, 2024 Regular Meeting as presented.

Motion: Trustee Prentiss

Second: Trustee Cummings

Board Discussion: None.

Motion passed unanimously.

Staff Discussion & Reports

Superintendent's Report

- Principal Johnson shared a few updates:
 - He recently attended the Montana Association of School Superintendents Conference in Bozeman.
 - Today we had a successful Walk to School Event in collaboration with the Fort Ellis Fire Department.
 - There have been some notices of local swatting incidents recently and we have been in communication with our school resource officer on plans and procedures if that

should even occur at LaMotte. Swatting is when a false threat is made to a school that triggers an emergency response. This type of incident can be hugely disruptive and unsettling to the community. Mr. Johnson is researching video monitoring systems and is interested in purchasing the E3 Safety App that would allow us to communicate with staff, parents, and law enforcement during any emergency.

- Title IX School Policy 3225 - Mr. Johnson is working to identify another person to be named as the “decider” in the event of a Title IX related investigation at LaMotte. Currently Superintendent Johnson is both the coordinator and decider if a Title IX investigation is conducted.
- We are working to replace the dose tank pump in our septic system. This work is scheduled for next week. We’ve also been experiencing a strange smell in the school and it is currently being investigated.
- Tax Credit Portal - We had a number of donations/tax credits directed to LaMotte that totalled almost \$30,000. There are many restrictions on how this money can be used, but we are so grateful for the donations. Thank you donors!

Trustee Discussion and Reports

Thank you to Leah Nusse and Suzi Rose for setting up the Mom’s Night Out event taking place this week. Next week the middle schoolers are doing a movie fundraiser selling concessions - Matilda. Next week we have two PIR days. There will be No School on Oct. 17 or Oct. 18. Middle School Student government elections took place last week. A trustee mentioned that they have noticed a lot of cars in the parking lot later in the evening and are just wondering who they are. This could be related to the recent bow training class that was hosted by Fish Wildlife and Parks.

Public Input on Non-Agenda Items

The LaMotte Board of Trustees welcomes public comment on issues and concerns. Members of the community are given an opportunity to make brief comments to the board on any matter not included in the agenda. Public matters do not include any private personnel issues or private student issues.

Financial Update

Approval of Accounts Payable and Payroll Warrants report and ACH payments

Board Discussion: None.

Motion to approve payroll warrant #21283 and ends at #21289; ACH payroll payments #86463-86445; payroll warrants 2977-2981; (voided payroll warrant 2976) and claims ACH payment #99847.

Motion: Trustee Cummings

Second: Trustee Prentiss

Board Discussion: None.

Public Comment: None.

Motion passed Unanimously.

Agenda Action/Discussion Items

1. Consideration and Possible Action of 2024-2025 School Budget Mills certification

Board Discussion: Business Manager Roberts explained why we are asking to recertify the Mill levels. Trustees discussed

Motion to approve the 2024-25 certification of the LaMotte District Mill Levies from 64.55 Mills to 64.15 Mills.

Motion: Trustee Prentiss

Second: Trustee Cummings

Board Discussion: None.

Public Comment: None.

Motion passed Unanimously.

2. Consideration and Possible Action of Request for Variance

Board Discussion: Since we are struggling to find a licensed music teacher for our 7th and 8th grade classrooms, we are applying for a Variance to Standards Application with the Office of Public Instruction. This request is a variance to Standard 10.55.902 (4) © (ii) & 10.55.1201 because we have been unable to hire for the music position. This will allow us to cast a wider net when hiring for the music position and still meet the education standards and continue our accreditation.

Motion: to approve the Variance of Standards Application as presented.

Motion: Trustee Oakes

Second: Trustee Prentiss

Board Discussion: None.

Public Comment: None.

Motion passed Unanimously.

3. Consideration and Possible Action of Hot Lunch Program

Board Discussion: Superintendent Johnson shared that we have a chef that has agreed to run our lunch program two days per week, barring the approval from Headwaters Academy, allowing us to use their kitchen for food prep. Surveys relayed that parents are generally okay with the \$7.50 price per meal. Pizza days could also be offered in addition to the hot lunch program, allowing us to raise additional money to offset costs for the hot lunch program.

Motion to approve contracting with Chef Peg to provide hot lunch two days per week.

Motion: Trustee Oakes

Second: Trustee Cummings

Board Discussion: None.

Public Comment: None.

Motion passed Unanimously.

4. Consideration and Possible Action of Policy Committee/Facilities Committee

Board Discussion: Superintendent Johnson suggested that it might be helpful to create a Policy Committee and a Facilities Committee. The Policy Committee would meet at noticed meetings in between board meetings to systematically review policies each year. This would allow us to be more thorough in our review and limit the amount of time that would be

dedicated during regular board meetings. A Facilities Committee would be helpful in maintaining our campus and buildings over the long term. One goal of this committee would be to create a Facilities Plan. Committees would report their findings at each board meeting. Trustees discussed the implications of creating separate committees. Trustees agreed to continue working through policies during Regular Board Meetings and liked the idea of creating a Facilities Committee when all board members are present at the November Regular Meeting.

Motion to table approving a Facilities Committee in November

Motion: Trustee Cummings

Second: Trustee Oakes

Board Discussion: None.

Public Comment: None.

Motion passed Unanimously.

Alex Prentiss left the meeting at 6:36 p.m.

5. Discussion and Review of Annual Goals and Objectives - Policy 1610

Board Discussion: Superintendent Johnson shared the Integrated Strategic Action Plan. This year we will aim to create a Profile of Graduate. Upon review of the LaMotte Educational Goals. This year we are working through each of the following goals: We are currently working to increase communication between teachers and parents. Increased outreach to non-parent community members. Additional Engagement Opportunities Expand environmental learning opportunities. Explore expanding transition opportunities: LaMotte MS to High School. Can we get our 8th graders in to visit the high school freshmen for a day? Evaluate parent and teacher communication –we sent out the first round of surveys and will continue to do so throughout the year. Communicate school safety and discipline plans - we recently did that with the approved Discipline Matrix.

6. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 6:48 p.m.

Motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motion: Trustee Cummings

Second: Trustee Oakes

Board Discussion: None.

Public Comment: None.

Motion passed Unanimously.

The next Board Regular Meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 20, 2024 in person at LaMotte School. For your convenience, the meeting will be broadcast with Google Meet. With the in-person format, public comment can only be made in person at LaMotte School.

Wednesday, November 20 · 5:00 – 6:00 pm

Time zone: America/Denver - Google Meet

Use the following link to access the meeting online: <https://meet.google.com/ofj-civk-yma>

Or dial: (US) +1 585-491-9312 PIN: 394 449 198#

Marci Torres, Board Chair

Leah Nusse, Admin Assistant/ District Clerk

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 - Motion:** Trustee Prentiss
 - Second:** Trustee Cummings
 - Board Discussion:** None.
 - Motion passed unanimously.**

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Motion: Trustee Cummings

Second: Trustee Prentiss

Board Discussion: None.

Public Comment: None.

Motion passed Unanimously.

Agenda Action/Discussion Items

1. Consideration and Possible Action of 2024-2025 School Budget Mills certification

Board Discussion: Business Manager Roberts explained that the Montana Department of Revenue had to recertify taxable valuations for all taxing districts across Gallatin County. On August 1st they certified LaMotte School District's Taxable Value at \$6,353,562, a 1.65% decrease from last year, stating this was due to a significant number of appeals from taxpayers, following the 2023 reappraisal cycle.

On September 27th they recertified LaMotte School District's Taxable Value at \$6,396,763, (adding an additional \$43,201 in taxable property), and valuing each mill at \$6,396.76. This is a .98% decrease from last year. DOR stated that they did not have enough resources to handle the high number of appeals to allow time to input new construction by the August 1st deadline.

This reevaluation does not change the dollar amount we collect in property tax revenue, we're still collecting \$410,159.22 in tax revenue for 2024-25. What it does is spread that dollar amount over a slightly larger tax base, in effect lowering tax bills. Although, this change is so minimal it will not be noticed by taxpayers.

On 8/20/2024 Business Manager Roberts reported 64.55 mills to support the tax requirement, and with this change the mills are now 64.15, a .4 mill reduction.

Motion to approve the 2024-25 School Budget Mills recertification of the LaMotte District Mill Levies from 64.55 Mills to 64.15 Mills.

Motion: Trustee Prentiss

Second: Trustee Cummings

Board Discussion: None.

Public Comment: None.

Motion passed Unanimously.

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6. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 6:48 p.m.

Motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motion: Trustee Cummings

Second: Trustee Oakes

Board Discussion: None.

Public Comment: None.

Motion passed Unanimously.

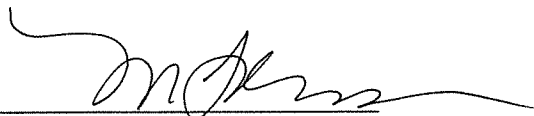
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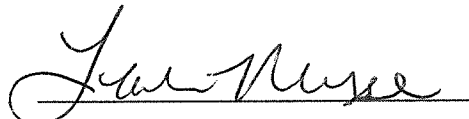
Time zone: America/Denver - Google Meet

Use the following link to access the meeting online: <https://meet.google.com/ofj-civk-yma>

Or dial: (US) +1 585-491-9312 PIN: 394 449 198#



Marci Torres, Board Chair



Leah Nusse, Admin Assistant/ District Clerk

