

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:
Second Monday in October

COUNTY:

DISTRICT:

LIST EACH SCHOOL THAT IS REQUESTING THE VARIANCE:
Bonner School (0794) and Bonner 7-8 (1734)

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.
10.55.1801., 10.55.709,

2. 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.)

3. Describe the renewal variance requested.

Bonner district-wide enrollment has declined some since our last variance request, and currently stands at 261 in K-6 and 69 in 7/8. While our numbers require an additional .01 FTE, we feel our existing staffing is meeting and exceeding the intent of the accreditation standards. The system approved under the original variance consists of a 1 FTE librarian, supported by multiple library aides trained in library and media data organization, check-out processes, and our library and media infrastructure. The approved original variance has enabled Bonner to provide robust library/media services in a manner that reflected our existing facilities and enrollment situation. Our updated and state-of-the-art technology infrastructure continues to support student and teacher access to the widest ranges of age-appropriate information through multiple media platforms in the library (Standards 1,2,4).

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

a. Workable.

Although ARM requires an additional .01 FTE (Full-Time Equivalent), the existing staff, including the 1 FTE librarian and the trained aides, are already managing the library services efficiently. This indicates that the current staffing level, while slightly under what might be calculated as necessary by strict FTE standards, is practically sufficient due to perhaps higher efficiency, multi-tasking capabilities, or the aides' support reducing the need for more formal librarian positions.

b. Educationally sound.

The quality of service provided exceeds the minimum requirements set by accreditation standards, demonstrating that the educational quality and access to library services for students aren't being compromised. We strive to focus on outcomes and service quality rather than strictly on staff-to-student ratios.

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

Although ARM requires an additional .01 FTE (Full-Time Equivalent), the existing staff, including the 1 FTE librarian and the trained aides, are already managing the library services efficiently. This indicates that the current staffing level, while slightly under what might be calculated as necessary by strict FTE standards, is practically sufficient due to perhaps higher efficiency, multi-tasking capabilities, or the aides' support reducing the need for more formal librarian positions.

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

Our librarian, along with supporting aide, is intentional about providing students and teachers resources related to fiction and informational texts, Montana American Indian primary resources, and all curriculum subject areas, and her experience allows our librarian to input strong support to classroom teachers' curriculum in the same areas.

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 mission of the Bonner Library is "to encourage students to enjoy reading, to foster an appreciation for literature, and to provide instruction in the effective use of ideas and information." The goal of the initial variance was to rely on instructional aides who support and assist the librarian with check-out, data entry, organizational processes and shelving books. This enables the librarian to support the Information Literacy/Library Media Standards through direct student instruction and to work closely with classroom teachers in support of their curriculum goals.

The existing variance as previously approved has enabled Bonner to provide robust library/media services in a manner that reflected our existing facilities and enrollment situation.

- 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.**

The annual book fair organized by our librarian has shown remarkable growth, with the most recent fair generating total sales of \$7,421.38.

Over the past three years, the time dedicated to face-to-face student interaction in the classroom has increased from approximately 18.5 hours to just over 20 hours per week. This increase has allowed for more immersive literacy activities, enhancing students' engagement with literature.

Participation in the Battle of the Books program has also seen a significant rise, with over 35 students from grades 3 through 8 engaging in the competition this year.

Library circulation statistics reflect a growing interest in reading among students. In the 2021/22 academic year, there were 4,897 books checked out. This number surged to 6,786 in the 2023/24 school year, indicating a substantial uptick in student reading activity.

- 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).**

We are confident that our determination to make gains in student reading and literacy proficiency is being achieved under our current configuration.

Required school district signatures:

Vice
Board Chair Name: Laurie Gendrow *Mark Messer*

Vice
Board Chair Signature: *Mark Messer* Date: 10-8-24

Superintendent Name: Jim Howard

Superintendent Signature: *[Signature]* Date 10-9-24

Email the signed form to:

OPIAccred@mt.gov

Regular Board Meeting
October 8, 2024
School Cafeteria

DRAFT

This regular meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Vice- Chair, Mark Messer. Members present were Mark, Marcus Bahm, and John Wilson. Laurie Gendrow and Teri Schuster were absent. Also present were Jim Howard, Superintendent, Shelley Andres, Principal, and Carrie Ruff, District Clerk.

Vice-Chair Messer had no comments tonight.

There was no public comment.

John made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 10, 2024 regular meeting. Marcus seconded. All in favor. Motion carried. Marcus made a motion to approve October payroll warrants #13361-13385 and electronic payroll warrants for \$300,576.79 and October claims warrants #23458-23503 for \$86,930.13. John seconded. All in favor. Motion carried. Marcus made a motion to approve the extracurricular fund report for the month ending September 30, 2024. John seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

Marcus made a motion to hire Robbie Jacobsen for the position of Head Boys Basketball Coach and Bryce Niebergs as Assistant Boys Basketball Coach at the stipends stipulated in the negotiated agreement. John seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

John made a motion to approve Jenae Bagby as Curriculum Administrator for the 2024-2025 school year at the stipend determined by the negotiated agreement. Marcus seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

Marcus made a motion to hire Daye Price as instructional aide for the 2024-2025 school year at a rate of \$14.50/hour. John seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

John made a motion to hire Dexter Crago and Amanda Martinez-Prochet as substitute teachers for the 2024-2025 school year pending successful completion of background checks. Marcus seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

John made a motion to approve 3 applicants for out of district enrollment for the 2024-2025 school year as presented. Marcus seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

Marcus made a motion to approve Bonner School's application for renewal of a library/media accreditation variance. John seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

Mrs. Andres reported there is no school on Oct 17 & 18 for MEA/MCEL, Parent-Teacher Conferences Nov 6 & 7, PTA updates, athletic updates, and current enrollment.

DRAFT

Call to Order

Chair Comments

Public Comment

Motions to Approve
Minutes, Bills, and
Extracurricular Fund

Hire Basketball Coaches

Motion

Hire Curriculum
Administrator
Motion

Hire Instructional Aide

Motion

Hire Substitute Teachers

Motion

Out-of-District
Applicants
Motion

Library Variance
Renewal Application
Motion

Principal's Report

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Mr. Howard reported on MCEL in Missoula, Gabby has started working with Carrie, middle school teachers are meeting with former Bonner students at Hellgate High School, and he presented Vollmer's List of how education has changed over the years.

Superintendent's Report

Marcus made a motion to adjourn. John seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 6:33 PM.

Adjournment


Carrie Ruff, District Clerk

Laurie Gendrow, Chair