

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:

Marion School, Marion School (7-8)

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 Services K-12

.5 FTE for Schools with 126-250 students

2. Describe the variance requested.

Marion School is requesting a variance from the state accreditation standard that requires a certified library media specialist. Due to a lack of available applicants with library certification, the district was unable to fill this position for the 2025 – 2026 school year. In previous years, library services were overseen by a staff member who fulfilled this role; however, that individual has since been reassigned to a different department and is unable to meet the hourly requirements for the position.

A current fourth grade teacher is pursuing library licensure with the support of the district. This teacher will use the 2025 – 2026 school year to complete coursework and prepare for the required PRAXIS exam, with the goal of being fully licensed by the following school year.

During the variance period, library services, resource management, and literacy support will continue to be provided by qualified staff under the supervision of the Superintendent/Principal. The district remains committed to meeting accreditation standards and securing a certified library media specialist for 2026 – 2027.

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

a. Workable.

The proposed variance is workable because Marion School has a clear and realistic plan to transition into full compliance with accreditation standards. A current fourth grade teacher has committed to pursuing library licensure and, with district support, will complete the necessary coursework and PRAXIS exam during the 2025 – 2026 school year. This ensures that a certified library media specialist will be in place by the following school year.

In the interim, library services, resource management, and literacy support will continue to be provided by qualified staff members under the direct supervision of the Superintendent/Principal. This structure guarantees that students and teachers will maintain access to library resources, technology, and instructional support.

Because a long-term solution is already in progress and immediate library needs will still be met, the variance provides a practical pathway for the district to uphold student learning opportunities while addressing staffing challenges.

b. Educationally sound.

The variance is educationally sound because Marion School has ensured that students will continue to have full access to library services, literacy resources, and technology integration throughout the 2025 – 2026 school year. While a certified library media specialist is not in place this year, library responsibilities will be overseen by qualified staff under the direct supervision of the Superintendent/Principal. This structure guarantees that instructional support, resource organization, and student access to materials are maintained without interruption.

Additionally, a current fourth grade teacher is actively pursuing library licensure with district support. This creates a sustainable plan that not only addresses the immediate need but also invests in a staff member who is already familiar with Marion's students, curriculum, and community. By preparing a trusted teacher to step into this specialized role, the district ensures continuity of instruction, stronger integration of library skills into classroom learning, and a long-term enhancement of the school's literacy program.

In this way, the variance protects student learning in the short term while establishing an even stronger, fully certified library program for the future.

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

The proposed variance is designed to meet or exceed the intent of accreditation standards by ensuring that students continue to receive high-quality library and literacy support while the district transitions to a certified library media specialist. Although the position is currently unfilled, Marion School has implemented the following measures:

Immediate Continuity of Services: Library operations, resource organization, and literacy support will be maintained by qualified staff under the supervision of the Superintendent/Principal to ensure students' instructional needs are met without disruption.

Pathway to Certification: A current fourth grade teacher is actively pursuing library licensure with district support, including completion of coursework and preparation for the PRAXIS exam during the 2025 – 2026 school year. This ensures that a certified library media specialist will be in place by the following year, exceeding minimum requirements by providing a staff member with both classroom teaching expertise and library-specific training.

Enhanced Integration of Library Skills: Because the teacher-in-training already has strong instructional experience within the district, the future library program will be more closely aligned with classroom instruction, resulting in deeper student engagement with literacy, research skills, and technology integration.

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

The proposed variance aligns with the intent of ARM 10.55.1101 because it ensures that students continue to receive equitable access to library services and literacy instruction while the district transitions toward full compliance. The accreditation standards for library programs are designed to guarantee that students develop research skills, digital literacy, and a lifelong engagement with reading. Marion School is committed to these outcomes.

Although the district was unable to hire a certified library media specialist for the 2025 – 2026 school year, qualified staff members under the supervision of the Superintendent/Principal will maintain library operations, support student access to resources, and collaborate with teachers to integrate literacy skills across subject areas. This safeguards instructional quality and ensures no interruption to student learning.

Furthermore, a current fourth grade teacher is pursuing library licensure with district support, including coursework and preparation for the PRAXIS exam during this academic year. This plan not only leads to full compliance by 2026 – 2027 but also strengthens program quality, as the teacher's classroom background will allow for stronger integration of library skills with core instruction.

By maintaining student access to resources, providing instructional support during the

- 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: Lily M. Brower

Board Chair Signature: Lily M. Brower Date: 9/9/2025

Superintendent Name: Julia Maxwell

Superintendent Signature: Julia Maxwell Date: 9/16/25

Email the signed form to:

OPIAccred@mt.gov

Regular Board Meeting Agenda of the Board of Trustees of Marion School District #54

September 9, 2025/4:30 pm

Zoom Link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87405809735?pwd=XMt0177Ef7DZBZp7CrylYucskjGhPb.1>

- A. Call to Order by board chair Lily Brower at 4:34pm
In attendance: Lily Brower, Cherie Stobie, Christian Holyfield & Rob via Zoom

B. Flag Salute

C. Consideration of Agenda

Add out of district agreements

Motion: Rob moved to approve the agenda

Second: Cherie

All in Favor: Rob, Cherie, Lily Christian

Opposed: No One

D. Consent Agenda

a. Claims 8/22/25

b. Claims 8/26/25

c. Claims 9/5/25

d. Minutes 8/12/25

e. Acknowledgement of out of district contracts

Motion: Cherie

Second: Rob

All in Favor: Rob, Cherie, Lily Christian

Opposed: No One

E. Public Comments

a.

F. Discussion

a.

G. Committee Reports

a. PTO

b. Teacher Rep Deborah Johnson we made it through the first week.

c. Clerk Report

Kami Johnson arrived

H. Principal Report

Lily asked about summer project completion and Julia talked about maybe doing a different model next year.

I. Assistant Principal report

J. Action Items

a. Application for variance of standards for Library for 25-26

We do not have a certified librarian. This is to show the state that we have a plan.

Mrs. Shinn is interested in library to get qualified this spring. This application is good for 2 years.

Motion: Lily moved to accept the application

Second: Kami

All in Favor: Rob, Cherie, Lily, Christian, Kami
Opposed: No One

b. Consideration of opening another SpEd position
Julia spoke to the influx of SpEd students this year. And we need to be able to meet the minutes required by the law. Julia is proposing posting for a second SpEd teacher to have a K-4/5-8 mode; if we do not get a hit within a month then post for a para to get the help. Discussion about what that could look like and what it looks like now.

Motion: Cherie moved to post for a special education teacher and if there are no applicants, post for a para.

Second: Kami
All in Favor: Rob, Cherie, Lily, Christian, Kami
Opposed: No One

c. 1st reading of Policy 8100

Motion: Rob moved to approve the first reading of Policy 8100
Second: Kami

All in Favor: Rob, Cherie, Lily, Christian, Kami
Opposed: No One

d. Consideration of forming a policy committee

Motion: Cherie moved to approve the policy committee of Lily and Kami

Second: Lily

All in Favor: Rob, Cherie, Lily, Christian, Kami
Opposed: No One

e. Define what constitutes a school sponsored event

Julia spoke to the fact that it has always been up to the administration and spoke that it should be made more solidified, so as when the administration changes, this doesn't change. Christian stated he feels it should be something that the school is paying for, the kids are getting credit for & the kids are representing the school.

Motion: Tabled for next month

Second:

Future Agenda Items

a. Student Handbook

Julia wants to modify it to a student/parent handbook to include items integrating the title audit required items.

K. Information

a.

L. Adjournment

Motion: Rob moved to adjourn at 5:39pm

Second: Cherie

All in Favor: Rob, Cherie, Lily, Christian, Kami

Opposed: No One

Board Chair- Lily Brower

District Clerk- Shannon Kvaalen

Regular Board Meeting Agenda of the Board of Trustees of Marion School District #54

Information about this agenda, including the Board packet and supplemental documents, is available at the School District office. Please contact the office if you have any questions. The Board may be authorized to amend the agenda to accommodate scheduling needs of interested parties. Citizens may comment on items appearing on the agenda when invited to participate during that agenda item by the Board Chair. Citizens may comment on items related to School District Business not appearing on this agenda during the Public Comment portion of the meeting. Public meetings may be recorded or broadcast by citizens. Questions about recording should be directed to the board chair.

Regular Board Meeting Agenda of the Board of Trustees of Marion School District #54

June 9, 2025/6:00 pm

Library

Zoom Link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81187824275?pwd=4aWlNtwkgv5sY69L4fsCXbGxQs2R48.1>

- A. Call to Order by Lily Brower at 6:05 pm
In attendance: Lily Brower & Kami Johnson. Cherie Stobie via zoom, Rob & Christian absent.
- B. Flag Salute
- C. Consideration of Agenda
Motion: Cherie moved to approve the agenda
Second: Lily
All in Favor: Kami, Cherie & Lily
Opposed: No One
- D. Consent Agenda
 - a. Claims 05/27/25
 - b. Claims 06/06/25
 - c. Minutes 5/12/25
 - d. Minutes 5/14/25
 - e. Minutes 5/30/25
 - f. Out of District attendance agreements 4 students going to SVSMotion: Kami moved to approve the consent agenda
Second: Cherie
All in Favor: Kami, Cherie & Lily
Opposed: No one
- E. Public Comments
 - a.
- F. Discussion
 - a.
- G. Committee Reports
 - a. PTO -
 - b. Teacher Rep - Brenda - we had a great end of the year and starting a much needed summer.
 - c. Clerk Report see report
- H. Principal Report see report
- I. Assistant Principal report see report
- J. Action Items
 - a. Consideration of 406 Contractors for maintenance
Kenneth Taylor was here to talk about his struggles and his willingness to work off some of their debt. Wanted to thank us for our leniency and patience. Now known as RAK Contracting. They are now subcontractors. To come up with a number, let's get bids on things and instead of paying someone else to do that

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job, he would do that work. They have gone through and gotten certified in many things. Kami asked about his availability. He spoke that he did have a 40 hr a week job so he is available in the evenings and weekends. He would not be able to pay for supplies for the jobs. He has more time than money. Cherie asked if he had an idea how many hours it would take to make up the debt. He said he typically charges \$125/hr, but would drop it down to \$100/hr if he is allotted the chance to do this. Lily asked if he could get in touch with Julia on Wednesday to get things lined up. Kami would like it to be lined out to utilize everyone to their fullest.

Motion: Kami moved to approve hiring RAK Contracting to work off a portion or all of what they owe us. Contingent upon a plan that is approved by management and maintenance.

Second: Cherie

All in Favor: Lily, Kami, & Cherie

Opposed: Opposed

b. Consideration of allowing Clerk to transfer money as needed

Motion: Lily moved to approve money transfers between funds as needed

Second: Kami

All in Favor: Lily, Kami, & Cherie

Opposed: No one

c. Consideration of Harlows 25-26 rates

Motion: Cherie moved to approve the 25-26 rate increase

Second: Kami

All in Favor: Lily, Kami, & Cherie

Opposed: Opposed

~~d. Consideration of changing monthly board meeting day & time~~

Motion: Cherie moved to change the date to the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 4:30 pm starting August 2025

Second: Kami

All in Favor: Lily, Kami, & Cherie

Opposed: No One

e. Consideration of approving MSPLIP insurance for 25-26

Motion: Lily moved to approve the MSPLIP policy for 25-26

Second: Cherie

All in Favor: Lily, Kami, & Cherie

Opposed: No One

f. Consideration of approving HVAC maintenance agreement

Motion: Lily moved to approve the HVAC maintenance agreement

Second: Cherie

All in Favor: Lily, Kami, & Cherie

Opposed: No one

g. Consideration of B Schrade stipend increase

Motion: Cherie moved to increase B Schrade stipend by \$1000.00

Second: Kami

All in Favor: Lily, Kami, & Cherie

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Opposed: No one

- h. Consideration of hiring A Jones groundskeeping for 25-26

Kami stated we needed to create a schedule so that she knows the expectation.

Motion: Cherie moved to approve A Jones for groundskeeping for 25-26

Second: Kami

All in Favor: Lily, Kami, & Cherie

Opposed: No One

- i. Consideration of hiring R McCully Title Para for 25-26

Becky stated that she will be push in not pulling groups.

Motion: Kami moved to approve hiring R McCully for 25-26

Second: Cherie

All in Favor: Lily, Kami, & Cherie

Opposed: No One

- j. Consideration of hiring athletic staff for 25-26

- i. B Swartswalter Boys BB Coach

Motion: Kami moved to approve hiring B Swartswalter for bb coach 25-26

Second: Cherie

All in Favor: Lily, Kami, & Cherie

Opposed: No One

- i. D Engeland Asst Boys BB Coach

Motion: Kami moved to approve hiring D Engeland for bb asst. coach 25-26

Second: Cherie

All in Favor: Lily, Kami, & Cherie

Opposed: No One

- ii. T Brist VB Coach

Motion: Kami moved to approve hiring T Brist for Vb Coach 25-26

Second: Cherie

All in Favor: Lily, Kami, & Cherie

Opposed: No One

- iii. S Scuderi Asst Vb Coach

Motion: Kami moved to approve hiring S Scuderi for Asst Vb Coach 25-26

Second: Cherie

All in Favor: Lily, Kami, & Cherie

Opposed: No One

- iv. A Jones Girls BB Coach

Motion: Kami moved to approve hiring A Jones girls bb coach for 25-26

Second: Cherie

All in Favor: Lily, Kami, & Cherie

Opposed: No One

- v. C Maxwell Asst Girls BB coach

Motion: Kami moved to approve hiring C Maxwell for girls asst bb coach for 25-26

Second: Cherie

All in Favor: Lily, Kami, & Cherie

Opposed: No One

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vi. R Kaufmann Cross Country Coach

Motion: Kami moved to approve hiring R Kaufmann For for cross country coach 25-26

Second: Cherie

All in Favor: Lily, Kami, & Cherie

Opposed: No One

vii. P Wright

Motion: Kami moved to approve hiring P Wright for athletic director 25-26

Second: Cherie

All in Favor: Lily, Kami, & Cherie

Opposed: No One

K. Future Agenda Items

a. Budget

L. Information

a. Kami stated she will be at the freedom day festival for a board table

M. Adjournment

Motion: Cherie moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:36pm

Second: Kami

All in favor: Kami, Lily, Cherie

Opposed: No One

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Lily M. Brower
Lily Brower - Board Chair

Shannon Kusalen
Shannon Kusalen - Clerk

Regular Board Meeting Agenda of the Board of Trustees of Marion School District #54

September 9, 2025/4:30 pm

Staff Lounge

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b. [Claims 8/26/25](#)

c. [Claims 9/5/25](#)

d. [Minutes 8/12/25](#)

e. Acknowledgement of out of district contracts

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Second: Rob

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E. Public Comments

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b. Teacher Rep Deborah Johnson we made it through the first week.

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