



VARIANCES TO STANDARDS APPLICATION

March 3, 2014

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 a variance to a standard or a section of 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 DATES

- First semester implementation; March 3, 2014
- Second semester implementation; July 7, 2014

COUNTY: Flathead

DISTRICT: Smith Valley, #89

LIST THE SCHOOL OR MULTIPLE SCHOOLS THAT ARE REQUESTING THE VARIANCE(S): Smith Valley Primary & Smith Valley 7/8

1. Is this an initial application (2 years) or a Renewal application (3 years)?

Initial Application

2. Is this for first semester implementation or second semester implementation?

First Semester Implementation

3. Standard(s) for which a variance is requested, i.e., 10.55.709. If there is a program delivery standard, be sure to list it as well. For example, 10.55.1801.

10:55.704(1)(b) - ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL: ASSIGNMENT OF DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENTS

4. Please attach evidence through official minutes of the board of trustees that local school community stakeholders were involved in the consideration and development of the proposed variance to standards. Stakeholder groups include trustees, administrators, teachers, classified school staff, parents, community members, and students as applicable.

Board Meeting Minutes - December 22, 2014 attached. Acting superintendent, (Laili Komenda, Principal) reported that she has discussed solution options with community members and staff.

5. Please provide evidence that the board of trustees adopted its application for variance at an official, properly noticed meeting of its board of trustees.

Board Meeting Minutes - December 22, 2014 attached.





6. Describe the variance requested.

Instead of requiring : a .1 superintendent (10.55.704) and a .5 principal (10.55.705), permit present staffing of a full time administrator with a principal endorsement to continue fulfilling this role.

7. Provide a brief statement of the mission and goals of this proposed variance.

Our mission in making this proposal is to save the district money in staffing that is not needed at this time. Our administrator has been fulfilling this role for over four years.

8. List at least one specific measurable objective(s) that demonstrates that the proposed variance will meet or exceed the results under the current standard(s).

The acting superintendent (Laili Komenda, Principal) will continue to fulfill the job descriptions of both Principal and Superintendent yearly, as measured by reports completed, and involvement in Superintendent organizations: Flathead Special Education Cooperative (FSEC), Northwest Montana Educational Educational Cooperative (NWMEC), and Crossroads Cooperative (CC) Boards. Mrs. Komenda is on the Management board of all three entities, and on the Executive Board for the FSEC and the NWMEC.

Additionally, there are numerous administrative performance objectives that have been being performed by the present administrative configuration we employ. A few of these are listed below:

1. The principal attends all School Board meetings, serving the role of advisor as prescribed in School Board policy.
2. The principal conducts staff evaluations per Montana Educator Performance Appraisal System.
3. The principal completes all reports required by the Office of Public Instruction.
4. The principal monitors student behavior
5. The principal communicates directly with parents, community, staff and trustees.
6. The principal carries out all duties assigned by the Board of Trustees and the state of Montana.

9. What data or evidence will be gathered to document progress toward meeting the measurable objectives?

Completion of TEAMS (Terms of Employment And Master Schedule) report, Title I Report, CSIP (Continuous School Improvement) Report, etc. for OPI. Attendance records to Smith Valley School Board Meetings, as well as FSEC, NWMEC, and CC board meetings.

10. In what way does this variance to standard meet the specific needs of the students in your school(s)?

Since the specific needs of the students in our schools have been being met previously by the administrative staffing we presently employ, we anticipate that their needs will continue to be met.

11. Variance to Standard: Outline how and why the proposed variance would be:

- a. **Workable. (Sufficient district resources are available for the success of the variance.)**





This variance actually saves the district from the difficult task of trying to fill a .1 position, or for having our present administrator take on an immediate internship. The variance allows the Board of Trustees to meet student specific needs by allowing the allocation of resources to areas that more directly impact students than increasing administration and bureaucracy. Resources such as instructional aides, up-to-date textbooks, additional certified staff to reduce class size etc. are all more responsible ways to allocate Smith valley school resouces than adding .1 administration

b. Educationally sound. (Applicant has relied on sound research as a rationale for the variance.)

This proposal is educationally sound. There is no research to indicate that a school of 13 FTE versus 14 FTE needs to have a different configuration for the administrative team. This number is arbitrary and does not meet the individual needs of small school districts. Educational research often finds rural education positive for students. The small school model with one district, one school, one administrator creates community and enhances communication.

c. Where applicable, aligned with program standards under ARM 10.55.1101 through 10.55.1901.

ARM 10.55.1101 - 10.55.1901 are the delivery standards for Communication Arts, Arts, Health Enhancement, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Career and Vocational/Technical education, Library Media, and School Counseling.

By employing one full time principal, versus a .5 principal + .1 Superintendent, we believe our proposal positively impacts delivery of content standards. Principals are typically the administrator who supervises the delivery of these standards--not a .1 superintendent.

12. Designed to meet the content standards for this area of the curriculum (only applies to those standards which also have related curriculum content standards).

N/A

RENEWAL APPLICATION ONLY: Please attach a summary of the data gathered to demonstrate that the variance cycle ending June 30, met or exceeded the standard. State the measurable objective for the initial or previous application.

Mail your signed form to:





Accreditation and Educator Preparation Division
Office of Public Instruction
PO Box 202501
Helena, MT 59620-2501

Board Chair Name: Richard F. Sutton

Board Chair Signature: Richard F. Sutton Date: 1/8/2015

Superintendent Name: Laili D. Komenda

Superintendent Signature: Laili D. Komenda Date: 1/8/2015

OPI USE ONLY

Superintendent of Public Instruction: _____ Date _____

____ Approve ____ Disapprove

Board of Public Education Chair _____ Date _____

____ Approve ____ Disapprove

AGENDA
December 22, 2014

Smith Valley School District #89
2901 Highway 2 West
Kalispell, MT. 59901

A Regular Meeting of the Smith Valley School Board of Trustees will be held on Monday, December 22, 2014 at 5:00 PM at the Smith Valley School Library, Flathead County, Montana.

- 1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**
 - a. Pledge of Allegiance

- 2. REVIEW, REVISION, AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

- 3. ACTION AGENDA**
 - a. Phone System
 - b. Superintendent Variance for OPI
 - c. Potential additional Coaching Stipend - 5th/6th Girls
 - d. Fit Kids program

- 4. ADJOURNMENT**

Board of Trustees - Minutes
Special Meeting
December 22, 2014

Smith Valley School District #89
2901 Highway 2 West
Kalispell, MT 59901

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The **Special meeting** of the Smith Valley School Board of Trustees was called to order by Chairman Frank Sutton at 5:13 p.m. on Monday, December 22, 2014. Trustees present were Frank Sutton, and Jerry Snell. Absent were Trustees Duane Dierenfield, Doni Bennett, and Sue Cameron. Laili Komenda attended as Principal and Serina Nelson as Clerk.

a. Pledge of Allegiance

Since there weren't enough Board members at this time for a quorum, and Ron Snyder from DCS was present to answer questions, the two present members asked the questions they had of Mr. Snyder.

Vice Chairman Snell asked why there was a difference of over \$10,000 between the out-right purchase price and the 5-year Small Business Program. Mr. Snyder explained that with the Small Business Program, DCS partners with the district and there is a lease. This covers the cost of the equipment, lease fees, and any maintenance that needs to be done. After the five years has expired, DCS will come back to the district with an annual maintenance contract. It will be based on the historical use and adjusted as necessary, up or down or not at all. Mr. Snyder also stated that if there is any major changes of employees moving around, there would be a 10 to 15% discount on programming for that. Chairman Sutton asked if this is the most reasonable change. Mr. Snyder replied that it is the most reasonable change. He added that he petitioned the vendor from whom he is getting some of the products to lower their prices since we are a small rural school and the vendor agreed to bring their price down another \$750.00. He stated the proposal he gave the district is using digital and allowing VoIP which means it does not require any rewiring for the phone system. The proposal from CenturyLink was strictly for VoIP and would require rewiring. Chairman Sutton asked for clarification that there is no need for rewiring. Mr. Snyder stated that is correct, there is no need for rewiring.

At 5:31 p.m. Sue Cameron joined the meeting via telephone allowing a quorum. Mrs. Nelson explained to Trustee Cameron everything that had just been asked of Mr. Snyder and the responses.

At 5:40 p.m. Doni Bennett joined the meeting.

2. ACTION AGENDA

a. Phone System

MOTION: Moved to approve the 5-year Small Business Program moving forward with DCS and the purchase of a new telephone system (Snell/Cameron). 4 – 0. Motion carried.

At 5:45 p.m. Sue Cameron left the meeting via telephone leaving Chairman Sutton, Vice Chairman Snell, and Trustee Bennett still in the meeting.

3. REVIEW, REVISION & APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: Moved to approve agenda as presented (Snell/Bennett). 3 - 0. Motion carried.

4. ACTION AGENDA

b. Superintendent Variance for OPI

Principal Komenda explained that as a result of the TEAMS reporting process, and changes in legislative rules regarding accreditation, schools with 14 to 17.9 FTE are required to have a 0.1

FTE Superintendent. Therefore, Smith Valley will have a deviation for the 2014/2015 year. However, the required FTE for a Principal is based on number of students; 175 to 250 students require a 0.5 FTE principal.

Principal Komenda sought input from OPI, and from Smith Valley stakeholders (including Board members, former Board members, and staff) in looking for a solution to the deviation. Using that input, and the fact that the district employs 0.4 FTE more administration than is required by the accreditation standards, Principal Komenda's recommendation is to apply for a variance.

Principal Komenda said that despite applying for the variance, she is seeking a long term solution in order to prevent future penalties for deviations to accreditation. Solutions being explored are Principal Komenda acquiring coursework to get a Superintendent endorsement. A quicker fix would be to have her enroll in an internship, but that solution would also be more costly to the district.

Chairman Sutton stated that he wondered if the district would be able to continue having a middle school due to rising accreditation requirements costs related to those regulations.

MOTION: Moved to approve the Variance to Standards Application as presented to the Board (Bennett/Snell). 3 – 0. Motion carried.

c. Potential Additional Coaching Stipend for 5th and 6th Grade Girls

Principal Komenda explained the initial poll of girls interested in playing basketball showed 17 girls which is too many for a single team. She stated the teams would consist of 5th and 6th graders on both teams. Joel Ahles said he would coach if the additional team is necessary. The district budgeted for a drill team with a stipend for that coach of \$500. There has been no interest from anyone to coach a drill team so that money can be used toward the additional coaching position. There was also an additional \$200 budgeted in the disposal services anticipating an increase in the second half of the fiscal year which didn't increase as much as was budgeted for.

MOTION: Moved to approve an additional 5th and 6th grade girls basketball team with a coaching stipend of \$750.00 if necessary (Snell/ Bennett). 3 – 0. Motion carried.

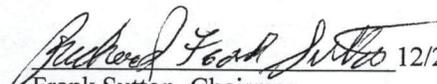
d. Fit Kids Program

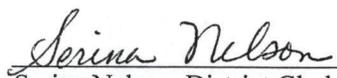
Principal Komenda stated that Mr. Ahles did receive the award of \$1000 for the Fit Kids Program. It will be on Thursday and Friday mornings for 45 minutes before school. The compensation for running the program and supplies will be out of the grant. Principal Komenda stated she was asking the Board approve the program since it is a change to the norm.

MOTION: Moved to approve Fit Kids Program (Bennett/Snell). 3 – 0. Motion carried.

5. ADJOURNMENT – Monday, December 22, 2014 at 6:25 p.m.

ATTEST:

 12/22/14
Frank Sutton, Chairman

 12/22/14
Serina Nelson, District Clerk