



DISTRICT WAIVER REQUEST FORM

District Name: Heber Springs School District

Superintendent: Alan Stauffacher

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District LEA: 1202000 **Submission Date:** 03/28/2019

Phone Number: 501-362-6712

Name of Charter School(s) Attended by District Students

Arkansas Connections Academy

Waiver Topic: Flexible Schedule

Statute/Standard/Rule to be Waived

Arkansas Code Annotated

- 6-16-102 School Day Hours

Standards for Accreditation

- 1-A.5.2 Planned Instructional Time
- 1-A.2, Credit Hours

Rationale for Waiver

Heber Springs High School needs to be able to provide its students with more flexible scheduling options. We have several different areas which need improvement.

First and foremost, we need to expand course offerings and make them available to all students, without having to hire additional certified staff to teach those courses. We would like to utilize a digital learning classroom, as well as allow students to engage in content outside of the academic day (nights, weekends, vacations, etc.). We are a very rural, isolated high school, with great travel distances to larger towns. In spite of this hurdle, we would like our students to have many of the same opportunities for courses that students in more populated districts have. In order to achieve this, we need not only expanded digital course offerings, but also the flexibility for students who do have travel time during their academic day to be able to take classes outside of normal school hours. We believe this will provide further opportunities for career track students and encourage them to remain in school, thereby increasing our graduation rate. We would provide transportation for those students who participate in the Buildings & Trades and Medical Professionals programs offered by Conway Career Center. In addition, we would be able to provide more and varied courses for college-bound students and allow them to accumulate more hours of college credit prior to their Freshmen year at a university. They would do this at the Arkansas State University - Beebe systems Heber Springs Campus.

In addition, we would like to better serve our medically fragile students. We have a substantial student population who have medical needs that significantly affect their ability to attend school regularly. We try to accommodate them through Section 504 and Homebound Services. Often, however, even these measures are not enough to keep them enrolled. Subsequently, they join homeschool programs. The ability to keep them connected with their hometown school and peers is paramount. A more flexible

scheduling option would allow us to offer them public school at home or in a medical setting through digital delivery systems. We sincerely believe that if we can see them through their times of highest need, they will be better prepared to transition back into regular coursework when they become healthy enough. This will also increase their chances of graduation and pursuing their chosen path of post-secondary education.

Overall, we believe more flexible scheduling options will be beneficial to all parties. It will result in Heber Springs High School students having many opportunities which cannot be had under the status quo. It will give us the potential to draw back in some home-schooled students who have withdrawn in the past, as well as help us to retain those who would leave in the future. It will expand course opportunities for our career track and college bound students alike. We hope to better meet the educational needs of all our students and give them a greater pool of course offerings to choose from, and lead them to greater success after they graduate from Heber Springs High School.

When the form is complete, email it with the waiver lists for the charter school(s) that serve district students to Kelly McLaughlin at kelly.mclaughlin@arkansas.gov. Waiver lists can be accessed from the Arkansas Department of Education: My School Info webpage at <https://myschoolinfo.arkansas.gov/>. Instructions for accessing waiver reports can be found at www.arkansased.gov/public/userfiles/Learning_Services/Charter_Schools/Accessing_Waivers_on_My_School_Info.pdf.

Questions should be directed to Kelly McLaughlin by email at kelly.mclaughlin@arkansas.gov or by phone at (501) 682-2130.

OPTIONAL CONSIDERATIONS TO ADDRESS

The State Board of Education requests, but cannot require, written responses to the following considerations as part of the petition for district waivers. All written responses should be emailed to the Arkansas Department of Education with the waiver request and list(s) of open-enrollment charter waivers.

Discuss the ways in which the proposed waivers will impact the district.

- Ways in which the waivers would support or complement the district's **vision, mission, and/or strategic plan**
- District **policies**, if any, that would have to be developed or revised to implement the waiver
- The **fiscal impact** of the waivers, if any
 - Additional costs associated and sources of funding
 - Planned uses for savings
- Effects of the waivers, if any, on current academic, fiscal, or facilities **distress status**
 - Ways the waivers will help alleviate distress issues
 - Potential for implementation of the waivers to cause distress issues
- Effects of the waivers, if any, on compliance with the **Standards for Accreditation**
 - Ways the waivers will help alleviate accreditation issues
 - Potential for implementation of the waivers to cause accreditation issues

Discuss the planning that has taken place to ensure successful implementation of the waivers.

- **Options considered** by the district to request the waivers
 - School of innovation
 - District conversion charter
 - Reasons district waivers are being requested rather than seeking a school of innovation or a charter
- **Student gains** for students if these waivers are granted
 - Academic gains
 - Other benefits
- **Implementation** of the waivers
 - **Charter** school(s) use of the waivers
 - ◆ Application of the waivers
 - ◆ Evaluation of ongoing need for the waivers
 - **District** use of the waivers
 - ◆ **Specific plans** to implement the waivers
 - Certain schools, grade levels, and/or programs to be affected
 - Description of the changes to take place
 - Length of time for which the waivers are requested
- **Evaluation** of the usefulness of the waivers
 - **Method(s)** to be used to determine benefits of and/or problems with using the waivers
 - **Timeframe** for assessing the use of the waivers
 - **Outcome(s)** that will demonstrate successful use of the waivers
 - **Plan of action** if use of waivers is not achieving the desired results

Discuss the transparency of the process and methods used for garnering support for the waivers.

- Efforts, including **methods, times, dates, places**, for notifying and including all stakeholders
 - Students
 - Teachers and other staff
 - Parents
 - Community members
 - School board (board resolution)
- **Feedback** received from stakeholders and how it was and will be used in district planning