



Act 1240 Waiver Request

District:	Highland School District
LEA Number:	6804000
Superintendent:	Jeremy Lewis
Email:	jeremy.lewis@highlandrebels.org
Contact for Waiver:	Jeremy Lewis, Superintendent, Highland School District
Contact Email:	jeremy.lewis@highlandrebels.org
Contact Phone:	870-856-3275
Date Received by DESE:	

The following documents must be submitted with the waiver request:

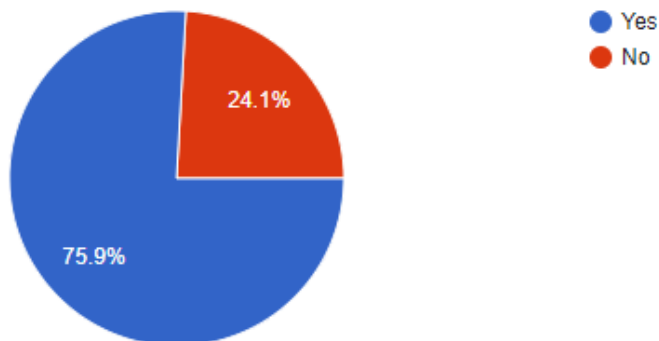
1. [Board resolution](#) approving the waiver request
2. Evidence of stakeholder involvement, including teachers and student families

Faculty and Staff

Would you support the school's efforts in seeking a waiver to start school as early as August 12, 2024, in place of August 19, 2024?

 Copy

170 responses

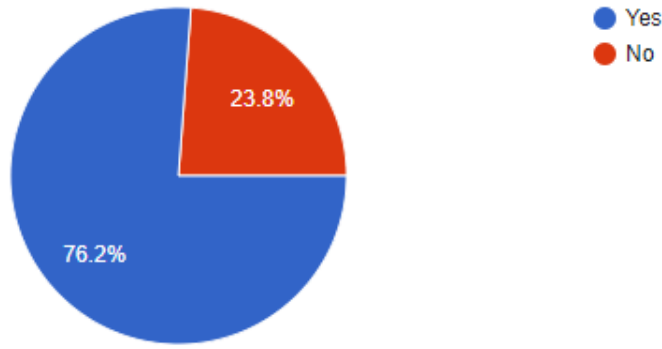


Stakeholders

Would you support the school's efforts in seeking a waiver to start school as early as August 12, 2024, in place of August 19, 2024?



63 responses



Waiver Request #1

Topic:	School Start Date
Standards/Statutes/Rules:	A.C.A. 6-10-106
Duration Requested:	2024-2025
Name of Open-Enrollment Charter Holding the Waiver	Arkansas Virtual Academy Arkansas Connections Academy
Schools, Grades or Classes the Wavier Will Apply To	K-12
PURPOSE OF THE WAIVER (Must check at least one)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Enhance Student Learning Opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Promote Innovation <input type="checkbox"/> Increase Equitable Access to Effective Teachers

1. Provide a **DETAILED RATIONALE** explaining how the waiver will enhance student learning opportunities, promote innovation, or increase equitable access to effective teachers. Include information about the problem or obstacle, if any, the waiver will help the district overcome.

The Highland School District is requesting a waiver from A.C.A. 6-10-106, which establishes the first allowable day of class as the Monday of the week that contains August 19. For the 2024-2025 school year that date will be Monday, August 19.

The specific waiver being requested is to allow the Highland School Districts to set their district's first day of class to be "no earlier than Monday, August 12."

The law as presently constructed results in a wide swing in the allowable opening date of school. At the earliest, it can be August 14, which was the case this year— fall of 2023. The latest possible first day is August 20 which, under the law will be — the fall of 2029.

The advantages of this waiver are several:

- The fall and spring semesters would be closer to the same length, and provide more teacher/student interaction days before the second semester. January and February are usually months in which we get inclement weather, forcing school to close, and without AMI days, reducing instruction time before spring assessments.
- This waiver will give greater assurance of school ending in May rather than extending into June. Some research indicates a decrease in learning past the Memorial Day Holiday.
- Beginning school earlier automatically results in more days of instruction before spring testing. More days of instruction will result in higher test scores,
- Activities such as football will begin next fall on the same relative date as they did this fall, with or without the waiver, Therefore a large number of students will already be on campus to practice and prepare for their activities, regardless of the opening date of school. In addition to students who play football, this would include students who are participants in groups such as volleyball, band, cheer, Student Council, and National Honor Society, as well as others.

The granting of this waiver does not affect any other law, rule, or procedure. The school year will remain the same length. It simply allows a district to continue with a school calendar structured as closely as possible to the current one. It avoids the dramatic change to the calendar which must result without the waiver.

2. Provide a detailed explanation of how the services being waived will be provided for students.

There will not be a loss of services for students under this waiver.

3. Provide a detailed explanation of how the district will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the waiver.

The district will monitor student assessment results and student attendance data related to the earlier start of the school year by no more than five days. The movement of the start date should have a positive effect on state assessment scores and student attendance.

The advantage is having more student instruction days before the state assessment.

Highland School District
1627 Hwy 62-412
Highland, AR 72542
January, 31, 2024

Resolution Number: 001031024

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF Highland School District AUTHORIZING THE DISTRICT TO REQUEST A WAIVER.

WHEREAS, the Highland School District Board of Directors is committed to providing a high-quality education to all students within the district;

WHEREAS, certain circumstances or regulations may require the district to seek waivers to better address the unique needs or challenges faced by the district;

WHEREAS, the Act 1240 waiver request to amend the start date of school to August 12, 2024, to provide for more instructional days before spring state assessments in the case of inclement weather;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of Highland School District hereby authorizes the district administration to formally request a waiver for an early school start date of August 12, 2024;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Superintendent or designee is authorized to take all necessary steps and actions to submit the waiver request, including providing any additional information or documentation required by the relevant authorities;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Directors expresses its support for the waiver request and acknowledges the importance of flexibility in addressing the unique needs and circumstances of the district.

This resolution shall take effect immediately upon adoption.

ADOPTED this Wednesday, January 31, 2024, by the Board of Directors of the Highland School District.



Jason Rhodes, President
Highland School District Board of Directors

ATTEST:

Johnny Carter

Johnny Carter, Secretary

[Your School District's Name] Board of Directors

Note: Please consult with your district's legal counsel and ensure that the resolution complies with local laws and regulations before adopting it.