



DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY  
& SECONDARY EDUCATION

## Act 1240 Waiver Request

<b>District:</b>	<b>Hector School District</b>
<b>LEA Number:</b>	5803
<b>Superintendent:</b>	Mark Taylor
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:Mark.taylor@hectorschools.net">Mark.taylor@hectorschools.net</a>
<b>Contact for Waiver:</b>	Mark Taylor
<b>Contact Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:Mark.taylor@hectorschools.net">Mark.taylor@hectorschools.net</a>
<b>Contact Phone:</b>	479-284-2021
<b>Date Received by DESE:</b>	

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

## Waiver Request #1

<b>Topic:</b>	School Calendar
<b>Standards/Statutes/Rules:</b>	Statutes: Ark. Code Ann. § 6-10-106
<b>Duration Requested:</b>	2024-2025 School Year
<b>Name of Open-Enrollment Charter Holding the Waiver</b>	Arkansas Virtual Academy
<b>Schools, Grades or Classes the Wavier Will Apply To</b>	Hector Elementary K-6 Hector High School 7-12
<b>PURPOSE OF THE WAIVER (Must check at least one)</b>	<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.**

For a school implementing a 4 day week school calendar, the mandatory start date of August 19th provides obstacles that hinder student learning success. With a waiver to the start of school date, students will have enhanced student learning opportunities accompanied with the removal of barriers that may affect student learning.

- With school beginning on August 19, 2024, in order to complete the first semester before the Christmas Holiday, the first and second nine weeks would have a disproportionate amount of days compared to the third and fourth nine weeks. For example, with a 4 day week school calendar, the first and second nine weeks would have only 36 and 32 student days per nine weeks. The third and fourth nine weeks would have 48.75 days respectively. With many classes being semester classes, this provides students in the first semester class fewer days of instruction compared to those receiving the instruction during the second semester. A waiver allowing the district to begin earlier than August 19<sup>th</sup> would allow the district to develop a calendar with more proportionate days between each semester.
- An early start date would give our 4 day calendar 36 days in quarters 1,2,3 and 35.75 days in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter respectively.
- A waiver to the start of school date would enhance student learning opportunities by allowing students to have more days in which to be taught the rigorous state academic standards before taking mandated state exams which are often administered during April or early May.
- As the weather continues to dictate in the winter school closings, it is even more essential for us to make those days count in August than late May and early June. Moving the start date up one week helps to get those days in on the front end of testing rather than the latter end after testing is completed. This waiver will give greater assurance of school ending in May rather than extending into June. More instruction days and earlier release date will help get an early start for tourism in the natural state.

**2. Provide a detailed explanation of how the services being waived will be provided for students.**  
 A waiver to the school calendar and the start day of school will not waive any services provided to students. With August 19<sup>th</sup> falling on a Monday and school not being allowed to start prior to this time frame, this

would meet the criteria of a very exceptional circumstance. Attached is the school calendar that our district wishes to implement with a waiver.

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

The district will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the waiver through:

- Stakeholder input. Stakeholders will include all staff, parent/families, and community.
  - A survey was sent out to stakeholders, staff and parents. The survey overwhelmingly approved an early start date.
- Attendance data- Our data shows that attendance is exponentially better in August than late in May.
- State assessment data- The district would like to get as many days in before testing starts in April and May. Adding the additional week will help achieve this goal.

**HECTOR SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**Minutes of Board of Education Regular Meeting**  
**January 16, 2024**

The Hector School District Board of Education met in regular session on Tuesday, January 16, 2024 in the High School boardroom. Board members present included Misty Barnett, Hunter Huffman, Carolyn Cook, Katie Baker, and Russell Hill. Superintendent Dr. Mark Taylor was also present. The meeting was called to order at 5:13 p.m. by board President Misty Barnett.

- I. No visitors were present.
- II. The board with a motion from Katie Baker and a second from Hunter Huffman voted 5-0 to approve the agenda and the minutes of the December meeting.
- III. Superintendent Dr. Mark Taylor recommended to the board to approve the financial report for December. The board with a motion from Russell Hill and a second from Katie Baker approved the report 5-0.
- IV. Superintendent Dr. Mark Taylor recommended to the board to approve renewing the legal liability insurance for the district. The board with a motion from Misty Barnett and a second from Katie Baker approved 5-0.
- V. Superintendent Dr. Mark Taylor discussed two calendar options for the 2024-2025 school year. Dr. Taylor recommended to the board to approve a resolution to proceed with the waiver application through DESE to request an earlier start date. The board with a motion from Carolyn Cook and a second from Russell Hill approved 5-0.  

The board retired into executive session at 5:23 p.m. and returned to regular session at 5:54 p.m.
- VI. The board completed Superintendent Dr. Taylor's evaluation and extended his contract by one year for a total of three years expiring June 30, 2027. The board with a motion from Carolyn Cook and a second from Misty Barnett approved 5-0.
- VII. Personnel
  - a.) Superintendent Dr. Mark Taylor recommended to the board to accept the resignation of Sara Turney effective at the end of the 2023-2024 school year. The board with a motion from Carolyn Cook and second from Katie Baker approved 5-0.
  - b.) Superintendent Dr. Mark Taylor recommended to the board to rescind the hiring of Rickey Fuller. The board with a motion from Carolyn Cook and a second from Hunter Huffman approved 5-0.
  - c.) Superintendent Dr. Mark Taylor recommended to the board to hire Taylor Lawrence (elementary teacher) and Gwen Gray (reading specialist) pending cleared background checks. The board with a motion from Misty Barnett and a second from Russell Hill approved 5-0.
- VIII. Superintendent Report- Dr. Mark Taylor discussed ideas on salary schedules and incentive pay. The February meeting was set for the 12th at 5:00 p.m.
- IX. The board with a motion from Russell Hill and a second from Hunter Huffman voted 5-0 to adjourn at 6:33 p.m.

  
Board President, Misty Barnett

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Board Secretary, Katie Baker

← Forms response chart

Hector

