



**DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY  
& SECONDARY EDUCATION**

## **Act 1240 Waiver Request**

<b>District:</b>	<b>Deer/Mt. Judea</b>
<b>LEA Number:</b>	5106000
<b>Superintendent:</b>	Brenda Napier
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:bnapier@dmj.k12.ar.us">bnapier@dmj.k12.ar.us</a>
<b>Contact for Waiver:</b>	Brenda Napier
<b>Contact Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:bnapier@dmj.k12.ar.us">bnapier@dmj.k12.ar.us</a>
<b>Contact Phone:</b>	870-428-5433
<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>	Library Media Specialist
<b>Standards/Statutes/Rules:</b>	Standards for accreditation Section 4.F.1 and 4. F.2 Ark. Code Ann 6-25-104 Library media services, Specialist qualifications
<b>Duration Requested:</b>	2022/23 – 2026/27
<b>Name of Open-Enrollment Charter Holding the Waiver</b>	Arkansas Virtual Academy
<b>Schools, Grades or Classes the Wavier Will Apply To</b>	Deer School K-12 Mt. Judea School K-12
<b>PURPOSE OF THE WAIVER (Must check at least one)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Enhance Student Learning Opportunities <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Promote Innovation <input checked="" 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.**

Deer/Mt. Judea School District is faced yearly with the challenging task of recruiting licensed teachers to the district. The teacher shortage is due to many factors present in our area including but not limited to teacher retirement, teachers leaving the profession before retirement age, low number of teacher education graduates, teacher recruitment from other districts, and lack of teachers willing to relocate to our remote area.

The district has been unable to hire a certified library media specialist. Our last library media specialist moved to the position of librarian for the county library. The district has been able to hire two paraprofessionals that work with the teachers to ensure that the library remains a hub for literacy in our district. Currently one of the paraprofessionals has signed up for the Reach University and is working towards her teaching license which should take around two years to gain her bachelor degree, since she already has obtained two years of college hours. Her goal is to become licensed in library media, so she will need to go further to obtain her Masters in Library Media and apply for her license. She has roots in the community and children in our school system and soon will have grandchildren in our school system as well. This waiver will enable the school district to essentially grow our own library media specialist.

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

All students have and will continue to have access to the library and high-quality services that we provide through our libraries. We have been able to build a partnership with the county library that promotes reading not only to our students on our campus but to the children in our community who are not school age. She will continue to serve as a mentor to the two highly qualified paraprofessionals that oversee the library to ensure that it is open for students. The county librarian will meet monthly face to face with the paraprofessionals to create plans for the month and then she will meet weekly with them virtually or face to face depending on weekly schedules to monitor the implementation of the plans that they create at the beginning of the month.

The classroom teachers are responsible for teaching the curriculum and they work closely with the paraprofessionals to ensure the library is open and plays an essential role in cultivating a love of reading for our students in the district. The library media standards promote literacy in a way that is able to be integrated into not only the literacy curriculum but also the content areas of the regular classrooms. The library media standards enrich the other standards being used in the classrooms because students are encouraged to

engage in inquiry across the contents and work not only independently but also collaboratively with others. These are skills that will serve them well not only in school but in life. The students are challenged to question, explore, think critically and solve problems in ways that inspire others in a safe responsible way.

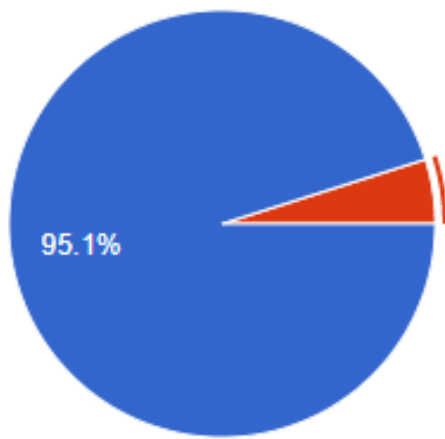
**3. Provide a detailed explanation of how the district will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the waiver.**

The principals will continue to monitor the progress of the instruction being provided by the teachers using the library media standards and the paraprofessionals under the mentorship of the county librarian. The district will also assist by providing resources and professional support to these teachers and paraprofessionals so that the students will receive the highest quality of library services. The district will continue to build on the partnership with the county library so that our students have access to the county library and librarian and the activities offered by them. The county librarian will also provide support to the teachers and paraprofessionals as she has been doing so far throughout our waivers.

**Stakeholder Survey Results**

The Deer/Mt. Judea School District surveyed parents, students, and staff on their approval of the district requesting the waiver for library media services. The survey results were 95.1% in favor of requesting a waiver for the position of library media specialist that the district has been unable to fill. Below is a copy of the survey question and the results that were recorded.

The screenshot shows a survey interface with a title "Act 1240 Waiver Request Stakeholder Input". Below the title is a text block explaining the survey's purpose: "The Deer/Mt. Judea School District at this time has not received any applications for the Library Media Specialist position, which is required by DESE. Therefore, we are seeking stakeholder feedback on requesting a 1240 waiver to fill the position with paraprofessionals to fill the open position. The waiver that the district has had in the past has expired and upon advice from DESE the district is seeking to renew this waiver." Below the text is a question: "Do you support the district seeking this waiver?". To the right of the question is a "Multiple choice" dropdown menu. Below the question are two radio button options: "Yes" and "No". Each option has an "X" icon to its right, indicating that the survey is closed for responses.



- Yes
- No

## RESOLUTION OF THE DEER/MT. JUDEA SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

WHEREAS, the Deer/Mt. Judea School District seeks the opportunity to individualize educational settings to create more personalized learning for all students and provide real-life opportunities to help students determine career paths; and

WHEREAS, a student's ability to complete required coursework in less than 30 hours per week would allow students to enroll in postsecondary training, participate in community service projects, participate in paid/unpaid internships; and participate in digital learning opportunities; and

WHEREAS, waivers of certain state laws and administrative rules would allow Deer/Mt. Judea School District to provide the aforementioned personalized learning opportunities for its students; and

WHEREAS, Act 1240 of 2015, codified at Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-103, allows Deer/Mt. Judea School District to petition the State Board of Education for all or some of the waivers granted to an open-enrollment public charter school that draws students from Deer/Mt. Judea School District; and

WHEREAS, Arkansas Virtual Academy is an open-enrollment public charter school that draws students from Deer/Mt. Judea School District; and

WHEREAS, the Arkansas State Board of Education granted Arkansas Virtual Academy a series of waivers, including waivers from (1) the Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing the Arkansas Mandatory Attendance Requirements for Students; and (2) Section 10.01.4 of the Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing Standards for Accreditation of Arkansas Public Schools and School Districts; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE DEER/MT. JUDEA SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS, THAT;

1. Pursuant to Act 1240 of 2015, codified at Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-103, the Deer/Mt. Judea School District administration is hereby authorized to request the following waivers from the Arkansas State Board of Education:
  - a. Ark. Code Ann. § 6-25-103
  - b. Ark. Code Ann. § 6-25-104
  - c. Standard 4-F Library Media Specialists:4-F.1, 4-F.2
2. The Deer/Mt. Judea School District administration may seek these waivers to take effect beginning in the 2022-2023 school year.
3. The Deer/Mt. Judea School District Board of Directors agreed upon this resolution by vote on September 20, 2022, during an open, special scheduled meeting.

By:   
Mr. Justin Gilmore, Board President

By:   
Mr. Anthony Casey, Board Secretary