



Act 1240 District Waiver Request Extension

District:	Lee County School District
LEA Number:	3904000
Superintendent:	Willie Murdock
Email:	willie.murdock@lcsdtrojans.net
Contact for Waiver:	Mary Hayden
Contact Email:	mary.hayden@lcsdtrojans.net
Contact Phone:	870-295-7126
Date Received by DESE:	

The following documents must be submitted with the waiver request:

1. School Board Resolution approving the waiver request
2. Evidence of stakeholder involvement, including teachers and student families

Waiver Extension Request #1

Topic:	Teacher Licensure
Standards/Statutes/Rules:	4-D.1 Ark. Code Ann. 6-15-1004 Ark. Code Ann. 6-17-309 Ark. Code Ann. 6-17-401 Ark. Code Ann. 6-17-418 Ark. Code Ann. 6-17-902 Ark. Code Ann. 6-17-908 Ark. Code Ann. 6-17-919 DESE Rules Governing Educator Licensure (Section 7 only) DESE Rules Governing Nutrition and Physical Activity (Sections 7.09.1, 7.09.2, and 7.10)
Duration Requested:	3 Years
Name of Open-Enrollment Charter Holding the Waiver	Arkansas Connections Academy, KIPP Delta
Schools, Grades or Classes the Wavier Will Apply To	Anna Strong Learning Academy (K-6) Lee High School (9-12 All Content Areas)

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.

Like many districts, LCSD has been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and other ailments. During the 2021-2022 school year, so far, two teachers to have succumb to the Coronavirus. Other personnel have suffered from other illnesses and were not able to return to work. While this may not be a unique experience for LCSD, the impact may be crippling since the district already has difficulty recruiting certified, experienced personnel.

Although the District has increased its base salary, it is still lower than those offered by surrounding districts, making it more difficult to recruit effective, certified, experienced teachers. Because the District has been able to use the Act 1240 Waivers, it has had some success in filling vacancies with highly qualified individuals with a passion for teaching. Benefits of the Act 1240 Waiver include the Lee County School District being able to recruit individuals who have not only acquired Bachelor's degrees but also advanced degrees. Our students are being taught by individuals who have the content knowledge. Also, several teachers who were hired under Act 1240 Waiver have remained with the District; therefore, providing stability for students and building capacity.

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

Benefits of the Act 1240 Waiver include the Lee County School District being able to recruit individuals who have not only acquired Bachelor's degrees but also advanced degrees. Hiring these

individuals as regular teachers positively impacts the culture and climate of the school, since students, parents, and the community responds more positively to teachers than substitutes. These teachers have been instrumental in providing a safe learning environment for students. The teachers participate in professional development and receive the same training as certified teachers. They are able to take their learning back to their classrooms and implement the expectations to ensure that the academic standards are being mastered. Also, students are able to be taught by teachers onsite rather through a virtual platform (however, we may use virtual educators, as well). In addition, our students are able to participate in extra-curricular activities, such as clubs and sports, even winning a state basketball championship.

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

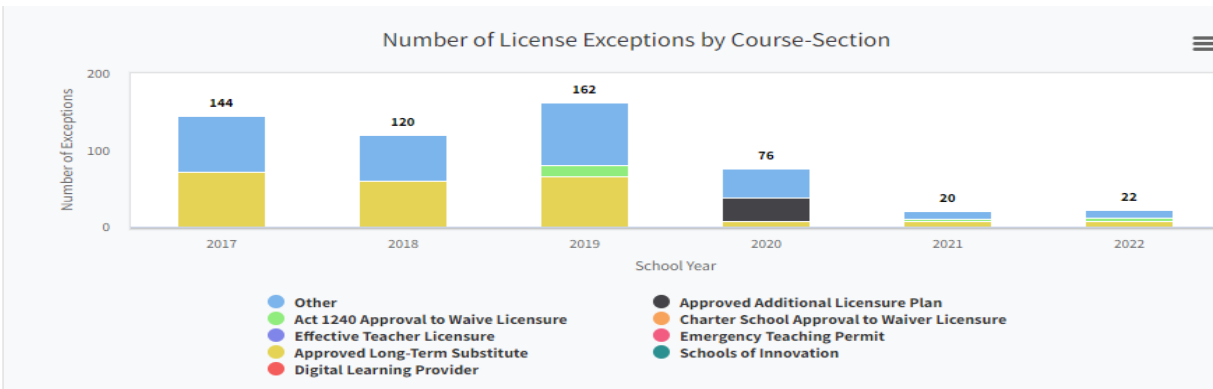
Non-licensed teachers will be evaluated using the same method as licensed teachers. The District uses TESS and EdReflect to evaluate teachers. These teachers report directly to the building principal, who formally and informally observes them throughout the year. Informal observations are conducted frequently by district-level and other building-level administrators, as well. Teachers will receive regular feedback from the building level and district level observers. The principal will evaluate the teachers and make a recommendation to the superintendent as to renew, non-renew, or dismiss the individual.

4. Describe how the waiver has ensured success in the school or district over the period the waiver was in effect. Provide data or evidence to support your answer.

The District has implemented practices to provide additional support to teachers hired under Act 1240 Waiver. They participate in Novice Teacher Training and the Science of Reading professional development provided by Great Rivers Education Cooperative, and they are mentored by experienced educators within the district. Students are taught by qualified teachers, which will impact student achievement.

Before using the Act 1240 Waivers, the District had been unsuccessful in recruiting certified individuals to be regular classroom teachers and to teach other courses, like Music and Art. At Lee High School, hiring teachers for secondary content courses, such as English, Science, and Math, had been and continues to be a challenge. However, the Waiver allowed the District to be able to hire qualified personnel to fill those positions. Earlier this year, we had several specialists from the ADE and Great Rivers assist us with providing instruction in several math courses. We have been able to hire a teacher with the content knowledge to teach Algebra and other courses.

In previous years, the District was forced to apply for numerous waivers for long-term substitutes. However, due to Act 1240, LCSD has been able to hire qualified individuals as teachers. The chart below shows the how the District has improved and decreased the number of licensure exceptions, especially for long-term substitutes.



Waiver Extension Request #2

Topic:	Library Media Specialist Licensure
Standards/Statutes/Rules:	4-F.1 Ark. Code Ann. 6-25-103 Ark. Code Ann. 6-25-104
Duration Requested:	3 Years
Name of Open-Enrollment Charter Holding the Waiver	Arkansas Connections Academy, KIPP Delta
Schools, Grades or Classes the Wavier Will Apply To	Anna Strong Learning Academy (K-6) Lee High School (9-12 All Content Areas)

- 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.**

Even prior to the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, Lee County School District had difficulty recruiting and retaining license Library Media Specialist. The last year that the District had licensed Library Media Specialist was 2017-2018. For the 2018-2019 school year, the District was forced to use long-term substitutes to fill vacancies at both Anna Strong Learning Academy and Lee High School. Both of those individuals had at least a Bachelor’s Degree from an accredited university, and one had earned a Ph.D. in Psychology. However, we could not hire them because we did not have the Act 1240 Waiver. The District applied for the Waiver in January 2019 and was approved. Still, finding a licensed Library Media Specialist was a challenge for the 2019-2020 school year. Because the District had been approved for the Act 1240 Waiver, the schools were able to hire well-qualified individuals. Anna Strong Learning Academy was able to recruit a retired teacher to fill the vacancy. This teacher had high student achievement percentage when she was a classroom teacher. Although Lee High School had filled the vacancy utilizing Act 1240, the school now has a licensed Library Media Specialist.

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

Benefits of the Act 1240 Waiver include the Lee County School District being able to recruit individuals who have not only acquired Bachelor's degrees but also advanced degrees. Hiring these individuals as Library Media Specialists positively impacts the culture and climate of the school, since students, parents, and the community responds more positively to teachers than substitutes. The Library Media Specialists have been instrumental in providing a safe learning environment for students. The Library Media Specialists participate in professional development and receive the same training as other certified teachers. Therefore, they are able to take their learning back to their classrooms and implement the expectations to ensure that the academic standards are being mastered. The Library Media Specialists have been instrumental in providing additional interventions and support to students, including credit recovery efforts.

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

Library Media Specialists will be evaluated using the same method as licensed teachers. The District uses TESS and EdReflect to evaluate teachers. They report directly to the building principal, who formally and informally observes and evaluates them throughout the school year. Informal observations are conducted frequently by district-level and other building-level administrators, as well. Teachers will receive regular feedback from the building level and district level observers. The principal will evaluate the teachers and make a recommendation to the superintendent as to renew, non-renew, or dismiss the individual.

4. Describe how the waiver has ensured success in the school or district over the period the waiver was in effect. Provide data or evidence to support your answer.

Before using the Act 1240 Waivers, the District had been unsuccessful in recruiting certified Library Media Specialists, and it continues to be a challenge. However, the 1240 Waiver allowed the District to be able to hire qualified personnel to fill those positions. The District moved from using long-term substitutes to hiring full-time Library Media Specialists. These individuals provided interventions and supported students during credit recovery. They also serve other roles such as English Language Learner Coordinator and club sponsor. The District was able to hire a certified Library Media Specialist at Lee High School during the 2021-2022 school year. There is an experienced, licensed educator at Anna Strong Learning Academy.

EVIDENCE OF STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

- 1. LEE HIGH SCHOOL SUPPORT MEETING NOTES AND SIGN-IN SHEET**
- 2. ASLA SURVEY RESULTS**

Lee High School Support Meeting

Literacy Support Log:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1-1Cc_PpAkUvGcxOwwQefC6jrx6DwoO90r-SJkI2fzN0/edit?usp=sharing

Math and Science Support Log:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1_DGsUXFQeRAKX2Eyv6u1uMYVWv7GDG5weEOMLUno_AU/edit?usp=sharing

Objective: To reflect upon the support provided to LHS first semester. To celebrate WINS and plan for the second semester.

Date: Wednesday, December 15, 2021 **Time:** 9:00 a.m. **Location:** Lee High School

Attendees: Constance Watson, Jacob Shaffer, **Patrick Quattlebaum**, Sheila Whitlow, Brent Miller, Mary Jones, Sereatheia Bracely, Dr. Matthew Farr, Mary Hayden

Time	Topic	Notes	Next Steps/Person Responsible/Expected Completion Date
9:00 - 9:15	Reports regarding tasks Assigned @ Sept. 1 Meeting	<p>Review agenda from last month and each person responsible provides a brief update.</p> <p>Celebrated the coordination between OCSS, Coop, and ST that has been recognized by DESE as a great model of coordinated support</p> <p>Ms. Hayden reviewed the current status of 1240 waivers and planned for extension for three more years. Also, discussed Opportunity Culture and other initiatives aimed at bringing in quality staff that are certified.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need support for teacher and planning for effective use of the Strategic Reading and Critical Reading classes • Utilize more high interest text <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Plenty in library storage just need to divvy out • Angela Davis will attend 95% Group for multisyllabic routines

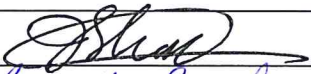
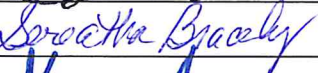
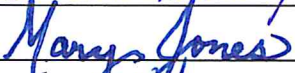

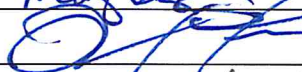
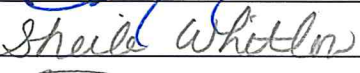

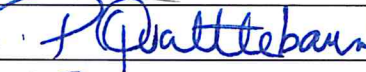

		<p>GRESA voiced support for the 1240 waiver and have been positive, especially with paras seeking certification.</p> <p>Role of onsite coaches was mentioned as possibly needing more strategic design. Everyone agreed this was a valid concern, but staffing and other roadblocks continue to make this a barrier</p> <p>Morphology is coming along well, still growth pieces needed particularly for upper-level English. They've attended the necessary training and are moving forward, this will just need continued focus</p> <p>Dyslexia is moving forward with Barton. Only has two students doing Connections (one per request as she's done Barton for quite some time). Sisk and Leon are now providing intervention as well. They've been trained and are providing needed interventions.</p>	
9:15 - 9:30	Report Logs: Pros and Cons—Improving the Tool	Reviewed the vision of the report logs Mr. Quattlebaum: Reviewed his approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will continue to use next semester

LEE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

LHS SUPPORT TEAM MEETING

DECEMBER 15, 2021

SIGN-IN SHEET

	PRINTED NAME	SIGNATURE	POSITION	SITE
*GR	Jacob Shafer		Lit. Spclst	Lee High
	Sereatha Brocely		Rdg. Specialist	Lee High
	Mary Jones		ISS	Lee High
	Mary Hayden		DOLS	CO
	Matthew Farr		Principal	LHS
AOE	Sheila Whitlow		OCSS Support	LHS
AOE	Brent Miller		OCSS Support	LHS
*GR	Patrick Quattlebaum		Sci Sp.	LHS
*GR	Constance Wetsom		Reading Sp	LHS

*GR = Great Rivers Specialist
 *AOE = Office of Coordinated Support Services



Act 1240 Waiver Impact Survey



Questions Responses 5 Settings

5 responses



Accepting responses

Summary

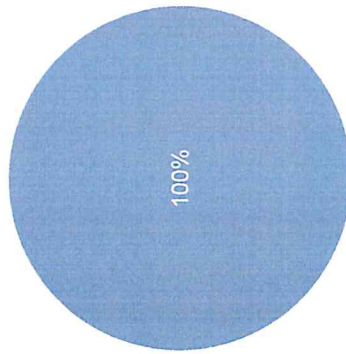
Question

Individual

Being able to hire teachers under the Act 1240 has been beneficial to Lee County School District.

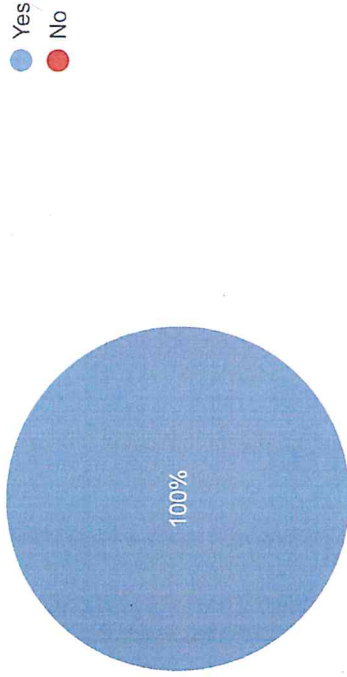
5 responses

Yes No



Lee County School District should apply for an extension to continue to hire qualified individuals to teach on the Act 1240 Waiver.

5 responses



Please, add any comments and suggestions below.

5 responses

The District really need more qualified teachers.

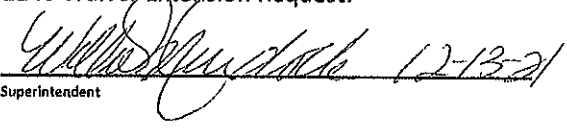
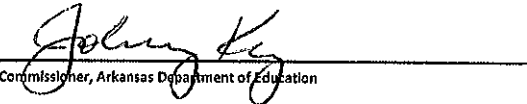
N/A

Having this waiver was very beneficial to our school. Without this waiver we would've been without so many teachers for classrooms.

None

Keep the waiver

LEE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
DISTRICT OPERATIONS

Action Item: 5
Subject: 1240 Waiver Extension Request
Prepared by: Willie Murdock
Rationale: The district is seeking approval of the 1240 Waiver Extension Request
Cost: Various
Funding Source: Various
Recommendation: I recommend that the Board of Education approve the 1240 Waiver Extension Request.
Recommended by: 
Superintendent
Approved by: 
Commissioner, Arkansas Department of Education



LEE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 1

161 Walnut Street
Marianna, AR 72360
Telephone: 870-295-7100
<http://www.lcsdtrojans.net/>
Willie M. Murdock, Superintendent

District Demographics

Lee County School District is located in the Delta region of Arkansas in one of the state's poorest counties. Based on data found on *MySchoolInfo Website's* Lee County School District page (<https://myschoolinfo.arkansas.gov/Districts/Detail/3904000>), ninety-seven percent of students are from low-income families (2020-2022). The average years of teaching experience is 9.73% (2021-2022). Student enrollment declines steadily each year, with students enrolling in nearby charter schools, private schools or other public schools or moving to other states.

Impact of Proposed Waivers on the District

LCSD is requesting an extension of the Act 1240 Waivers for Teacher Licensure (Standard 4-D.1) and Library Media Specialist (Standard 4-F.1), which will allow Lee County School District to continue to meet the educational needs of our students and to meet the Standards for Accreditation for Standard 4: Human Capital. As many districts, LCSD has been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and other ailments. During the 2021-2022 school year, the District has had two teachers to pass away. Other personnel have suffered from other illnesses. While this may not be a unique experience for LCSD, the impact is crippling since the district already has difficulty recruiting certified experienced personnel.

Although the District has increased its base salary, it is still lower than those offered by surrounding districts, making it more difficult to recruit effective, experienced teachers. Because the District has been able to use the Act 1240 Waivers, it has some success in filling vacancies with highly qualified individuals with a passion for teaching. Benefits of the Act 1240 Waiver include the Lee County School District being able to recruit individuals who have not only acquired Bachelor's degrees but also advanced degrees. The District will be able to continue to hire these individuals and assist them in becoming certified teachers. They will receive training and professional development to grow their skills. When they become licensed teachers, they will already be a part of the District; hence, "growing our own teachers." So far, three teachers hired under Act 1240 have received provisional licenses. Also, hiring these individuals as regular teachers will positively impact the culture and climate of the school, since students, parents, and the community responds more positively to teachers than substitutes. These individuals will be instrumental in providing a safe, learning environment for students and ensure that the academic standards are being mastered.

Careful scrutiny of the district policies found no need for development or revision of policies. The financial impact to the district will be minimal. The individuals will be paid from the operating fund according to the salary schedule for certified personnel, which may potentially ease the financial obligations on the district. Many of these individuals



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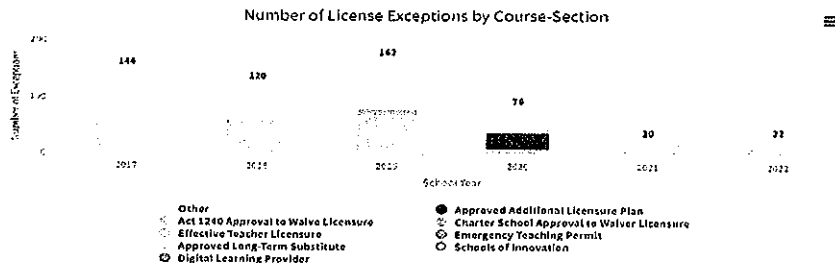
will be hired as novice teachers, being paid from the lower end of the salary schedule; therefore, potentially saving the district money.

Plan for Successful Implementation

The District has implemented practices to provide additional support to teachers hired under ACT 1240. They participate in Novice Teacher Training and the Science of Reading professional development provided by Great Rivers Education Cooperative, and they are mentored by experienced educators within the district. Students are taught by qualified teachers, which will impact student achievement.

Before using the Act 1240 Waivers, the District had been unsuccessful in recruiting certified individuals to be regular classroom teachers and to teach other courses, like K-6 Music and K-6 Art. At Lee High School, hiring teachers for secondary content courses, such as English, Science (including Biology and Physical Science), and Math, and Library Media Specialist had also been and continues to be a challenge. However, the 1240 Waiver allowed the District to be able to hire qualified personnel to fill those positions. We now have a certified Library Media Specialist at Lee High School and an experienced, certified educator at Anna Strong Learning Academy.

In previous years, the District was forced to apply for numerous waivers for long-term substitutes. However, due to Act 1240, LCSD has been able to hire qualified individuals as teachers. The chart below shows the how the District has improved and decreased the number of exceptions, especially for long-term substitutes.



To resolve the issue of not having certified teachers, the District recruited para-professionals and well-qualified applicants with Bachelor's or advanced degrees, as well as retired teachers to fill the vacancies. The long-term substitutes have enrolled in or have planned to enroll in non-traditional licensure programs to become certified teachers; however, it can take as long as three years to complete some of these



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programs. The District has partnered with *Teach for America*, *Arkansas Teacher Corp*, *APPEL* or other alternative licensure programs to hire teachers.

Non-licensed teachers will be evaluated using the same method as licensed teachers. The District uses TESS and EdReflect to evaluate teachers. These teachers will receive regular feedback from the building level and district level observers. The principal will evaluate the teachers and make a recommendation to the superintendent as to renew, non-renew, or dismiss the individual.

LCSLD request the extension of the Act 1240 waiver for the remainder of the 2021-2022 school year and for the next three school years, upon the conclusion of 2024-2025 school year. The intended outcome is ultimately student achievement. Our goal is to increase the percentage of students scoring at least "Ready," to increase the average growth in all tested content areas, and to increase the graduation rate.

The District will continue all efforts to find and hire licensed teachers by attending teacher job fairs sponsored colleges, universities, and ADE, as well as advertise in local and state newspapers and online job search engines, such as the AAEA Job Board. The District will also continue to encourage non-licensed staff to pursue their license as there have been three para-professionals, each with at least fifteen years of instructional support experience with Lee County, who have become classroom teachers under Act 1240.

Transparency of the Process and Methods

The District made the initial request for the Act 1240 Waivers upon the strong recommendation from ADE specialists. Other districts in the surrounding areas had already taken advantage of the implementing waivers and hiring qualified unlicensed individuals. Superintendent Johnson made the recommendation to the School Board on December 18, 2018, during the regularly scheduled meeting. The School Board approved the recommendation. The Waivers have been quite beneficial to LCSLD. We ask that the Board will honor the request to extend the waivers an additional three years as the District continues to seek highly qualified, certified teachers.