



# MARVELL-ELAINE SCHOOL DISTRICT

P o Box 1870 | Marvell, Arkansas 72366 | 870.829.2101



## Act 1240 Waiver Request

|                               |                                       |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>District:</b>              | <b>Marvell-Elaine School District</b> |
| <b>LEA Number:</b>            | 5404                                  |
| <b>Superintendent:</b>        | Dr. Phong Tran                        |
| <b>Email:</b>                 | ptran@mesd1.org                       |
| <b>Contact for Waiver:</b>    | Phong Tran                            |
| <b>Contact Email:</b>         | ptran@mesd1.org                       |
| <b>Contact Phone:</b>         | 504-458-4512                          |
| <b>Date Received by DESE:</b> |                                       |

## Waiver Request #1

|                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Topic:</b>                                              | Employ Full-Time Superintendent                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Standards/Statutes/Rules:</b>                           | Standard 4-B.1; Standard 4-B.2; Statute A.C.A 6-13-109                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Duration Requested:</b>                                 | 1 Year                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Name of Open-Enrollment Charter Holding the Waiver</b>  | Friendship Aspire Academies Arkansas                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Schools, Grades or Classes the Wavier Will Apply To</b> | K-12                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>PURPOSE OF THE WAIVER (Must check at least one)</b>     | <input type="checkbox"/> Enhance Student Learning Opportunities<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Promote Innovation<br><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.**

MESD contracts with the CMO Friendship Education Foundation for the services of the superintendent. MESD would like to retain the ability to hire a Superintendent based on experience regardless of licensure. Friendship Superintendents go through a rigorous internal training program that provides them with the skill set they need to operate an effective school. .

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

The school will maintain a Superintendent which will have no effect on the students.

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

The current Friendship Superintendent has completed the Superintendent Mentoring program within the first 12 months of employment.

## Waiver Request #2

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|------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Topic:</b>                                              | Gifted and Talented                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Standards/Statutes/Rules:</b>                           | DESE Rules Governing Gifted and Talented Program Approval Standards; Statute A.C.A 6-42-109; Statute A.C.A. 6-20-2208(c)(6); Standard 2-G.1                                                           |
| <b>Duration Requested:</b>                                 | 1 year                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Name of Open-Enrollment Charter Holding the Waiver</b>  | Friendship Aspire Academies Arkansas                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Schools, Grades or Classes the Wavier Will Apply To</b> | K-12                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>PURPOSE OF THE WAIVER (Must check at least one)</b>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Enhance Student Learning Opportunities<br><input type="checkbox"/> Promote Innovation<br><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.**

This waiver allows MESD to enhance student learning and increases equitable access to effective teachers by allowing our school leaders to keep all scholars in the classroom with their peers. We believe an environment that is student-centered, engaging and rigorous is best for all students.

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

An engaging and rigorous instructional environment will take place in every classroom that will challenge all students to maximize their potential.

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

Student testing will be conducted throughout the year that will allow the teachers and school leaders to determine those students who need additional support and those students who are prepared for more enhanced instruction.

### Waiver Request #3

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|------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Topic:</b>                                              | School Counselor; School Counselor Ratio                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Standards/Statutes/Rules:</b>                           | Statute A.C.A. 6-18-2003(a) (2) (A) ; Standard 4-E.1, 4-E.2                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Duration Requested:</b>                                 | 1 Year                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Name of Open-Enrollment Charter Holding the Waiver</b>  | Friendship Aspire Academies Arkansas                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Schools, Grades or Classes the Wavier Will Apply To</b> | K-12                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>PURPOSE OF THE WAIVER (Must check at least one)</b>     | <input type="checkbox"/> Enhance Student Learning Opportunities<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Promote Innovation<br><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.**

MESD would like to employ a social worker instead of a school counselor to support our scholars and their emotional needs. The decision to employ a social worker instead of a school counselor is based on the unique needs of our scholar population.

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

In terms of academic support, that work is performed by the principal due to the student population. The ability of the social worker to support our scholars and connect them with outside resources increases the likelihood of scholars spending more time in front of effective teachers, enhancing their learning opportunities.

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

Annually, a comprehensive school counseling plan is developed and placed on the school website

### Waiver Request #4

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|------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Topic:</b>                                              | Library Media Specialist Licensure; Library Media Services-Library Media Specialist licensure; Library Media Services-Program; Library media Specialist Ratio                                         |
| <b>Standards/Statutes/Rules:</b>                           | Standard 4-F.1; Statute A.C.A. 6-25-104; Statute A.C.A. 6-25-103; Standard 4-F.2                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Duration Requested:</b>                                 | 1 Year                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Name of Open-Enrollment Charter Holding the Waiver</b>  | Friendship Aspire Academies Arkansas                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Schools, Grades or Classes the Wavier Will Apply To</b> | K-12                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>PURPOSE OF THE WAIVER (Must check at least one)</b>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Enhance Student Learning Opportunities<br><input type="checkbox"/> Promote Innovation<br><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.**

Having rich text classroom environments, as opposed to a centralized library/media center, enhances student-learning opportunities within the classroom. It provides scholars with more frequent and accessible access to media under the supervision of their classroom teacher.

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

Library media standards will be taught in the ELA classrooms. ELA teachers will be trained on library media standards in their PLC's, in order for the standards to be embedded in ELA courses.

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

Effectiveness will be measured by the teachers in the classroom.

## Waiver Request #5

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|------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Topic:</b>                                              | Personnel-Daily Planning Period                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Standards/Statutes/Rules:</b>                           | Statute A.C.A. 6-17-114                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Duration Requested:</b>                                 | 1 Year                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Name of Open-Enrollment Charter Holding the Waiver</b>  | Friendship Aspire Academies Arkansas                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Schools, Grades or Classes the Wavier Will Apply To</b> | K-12                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>PURPOSE OF THE WAIVER (Must check at least one)</b>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Enhance Student Learning Opportunities<br><input type="checkbox"/> Promote Innovation<br><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.**

Though MESD will recommend that the master schedule provide a minimum of two hundred minutes of planning time each week, we wish to have the ability for the minutes to be provided (if necessary) in a manner different than that required by the statute (i.e., less than 40 minutes at a time).

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

This waiver would ensure that scholars are supervised by a highly effective teacher in lieu of a substitute teacher.

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

Effectiveness will be measured by the teachers in the classroom.

## Waiver Request #6

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|------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Topic:</b>                                              | Personnel Policies-Requirements; Personnel Policies-Classified Personnel Policies.                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Standards/Statutes/Rules:</b>                           | Statute A.C.A. 6-17-201 et seq.; statute A.C.A 6-17-2301 et.seq.                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Duration Requested:</b>                                 | 1 Year                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Name of Open-Enrollment Charter Holding the Waiver</b>  | Friendship Aspire Academies Arkansas                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Schools, Grades or Classes the Wavier Will Apply To</b> | K-12                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>PURPOSE OF THE WAIVER (Must check at least one)</b>     | <input type="checkbox"/> Enhance Student Learning Opportunities<br><input type="checkbox"/> Promote Innovation<br><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.**

MESD will develop human resource policies and procedures that are best suited to serve our innovative education model, including, but not limited to the following: terms and conditions of employment; salary schedule, fringe benefits, and other compensation issues; annual school calendar, including workdays and holidays; evaluation procedures; leave; grievance procedures; termination or suspension, reduction in force and assignments.

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

This waiver will not affect services provided to students.

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

Effectiveness will be measured by the administration of the school.



### Waiver Request #7

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|------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Topic:</b>                                              | Teacher Licensure                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Standards/Statutes/Rules:</b>                           | DESE Rule Educator Licensure, Section 7 only; Statute A.C.A. 6-15-1004; 6-17-309; 6-17-401; 6-17-418; 6-17-902; and 6-17-919                                                                          |
| <b>Duration Requested:</b>                                 | 1 Year                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Name of Open-Enrollment Charter Holding the Waiver</b>  | Friendship Aspire Academies Arkansas                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Schools, Grades or Classes the Wavier Will Apply To</b> | K-12                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>PURPOSE OF THE WAIVER (Must check at least one)</b>     | <input type="checkbox"/> Enhance Student Learning Opportunities<br><input type="checkbox"/> Promote Innovation<br><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.**

MESD, being a rural small school, continues to find it very difficult to find and hire certified teachers. MESD selects educators based upon classroom and culture management, high expectations, commitment to data-driven instruction, and past achievement. Continuous targeted support and development is critical in closing the achievement gap and enhancing student learning opportunities and increasing equitable access to effective teachers.

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

Student services will not be affected. All of our core and fine arts teachers will meet the AQT requirements and will meet specific and rigorous MESD hiring standards. All MESD teachers must have a bachelor's degree at a minimum and have evidence, per AQT requirements, of competency in the content area. However, within those requirements, we want our principal to have the autonomy to hire the best possible teachers, even if some of those candidates' qualifications do not include an Arkansas teacher license. The school will be committed to recruiting and hiring quality staff members. Furthermore, MESD through Friendship builds human capital through annual training for all new principals and other team leaders. The training addresses the fundamentals of school organization, student management, and student achievement.

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

Effectiveness will be measured by the school administrators..

### Waiver Request #8

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|------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Topic:</b>                                              | Ability in Awarding Course Credit                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Standards/Statutes/Rules:</b>                           | Statute A.C.A. 6-15-216                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Duration Requested:</b>                                 | 1 Year                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Name of Open-Enrollment Charter Holding the Waiver</b>  | Friendship Aspire Academies Arkansas                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Schools, Grades or Classes the Wavier Will Apply To</b> | K-12                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>PURPOSE OF THE WAIVER (Must check at least one)</b>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Enhance Student Learning Opportunities<br><input type="checkbox"/> Promote Innovation<br><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.**

MESD uses a holistic, standards-based grading system which enhances student learning opportunities and promotes innovation in teaching and learning. Focusing on competency over completion ensures scholars have mastered a standard and not an academic task alone.

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

Standards based grading is for elementary and middle school students. High school students may utilize an online platform such as Edmentum for instruction and awarding of credits.

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

Effectiveness will be measured by the teachers in the classroom and administration.