# Act 1240 Digital Learning Waiver Request

Status: **Submitted to ADE DESE**

## 🏛 Helena/ West Helena School District (5403000)

### School Year 2021-2022

> ⓘ New Digital Learning Waiver requests can not be created after May 1st. Existing drafts and revisions will continue to be reviewed.

Applications will be reviewed in the order received. Incomplete applications will be returned to the district.

A notification letter will be sent to the superintendent at the email address listed above upon approval by the Arkansas State Board of Education.

NOTE: The approved application must then be posted on the district website - State Required Information.

**District:**

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| **LEA #:** | 5403000 |
| **Superintendent:** | Linda English |
| **Email:** | lenglish1@hwhschools.org |
| **Phone:** | (870) 338-4425 Ext. 105 |
| **Duration Requested (not to exceed five years):** | 1 Year (School year 2021-2022 to 2022-2023) |

### The proposed waiver(s) will apply to the following schools:

| LEA(s) | Grades/Courses | Interaction | Delivery | Platforms |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5403019 - Central High School | 7-12 | Asynchronous | Blended (Hybrid) | LMS CMS |
| 5403023 - J.F. Wahl Elementary School | 5-6 | Asynchronous | Blended (Hybrid) | LMS CMS |

## Waivers

| Waiver Topic | Standard for Accreditation | Division Rules | Arkansas Statutes | Indicate if the district is applying for the waiver and explain how the district waiver will be utilized. |
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| **Attendance** | | | 6-18-213(a)(2) | The Helena-West Helena School District will be seeking this waiver and the virtual students will log in daily for attendance with scheduled meetings with their assigned teacher of the Cougar Virtual Academy. |
| **Class Size** Number of students: | 1-A.5 | DESE Rules Governing Class Size and Teaching Load | 6-17-812(a)(2) | Teachers of record for virtual students will follow DESE's rules for class size. Helena -West Helena School District will not be applying for this waiver. |
| **Teaching Load** Number of students: 0 Teacher of Record provides virtual instruction to only students who are remote. Please note that 100% virtual (online) or remote (distance) classes are considered large group instruction courses as per DESE Rules for Distance and Digital Learning and teaching load would not apply as per DESE Rules Governing Class Size and Teaching Load. | 1-A.5 | DESE Rules Governing Class Size and Teaching Load | 6-17-812 | Teaching loads for virtual classes will follow DESE's rules for teaching load. Helena West Helena School District will not be applying for this waiver. |

| Waiver Topic | Standard for Accreditation | Division Rules | Arkansas Statutes | Indicate if the district is applying for the waiver and explain how the district waiver will be utilized. |
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| **Six Hour Instructional Day** (Waiver applies to virtual/remote students only) | 1-A.4.2 | | 6-16-102; 6-16-126 | The Cougar Virtual Academy will have a six-hour instructional day with flexible modes of instruction such as small group, large group, independent work, etc. Helena West Helena School District will be applying for this waiver. |
| **Clock Hours** | 1-A.2 | | | The Cougar Virtual Academy will work to complete mastery of standards during the required 60 hours of seat time. Helena West Helena School District will be applying for this waiver. |
| **Recess** (Waiver applies to virtual/remote students only) | 1-A.4.3 | DESE Rules Governing Nutrition and Physical Activity Standards and Body Mass Index, Section 7.11 | 6-6-102(a)(5) | The Cougar Virtual Academy will request a waiver for 5th and 6th grades virtual students. During instructional time suggested physical activity and brain breaks will be offered to students. |

## Digital Model

Please complete the following application with responses describing the school and district digital programming.

## Interaction / Delivery

What are the ways teachers and students will interact with digital content (Synchronous or Asynchronous)? Please describe instructional expectations and participation for students.

Teachers and students will be engaged in teaching and learning at different times and different locations (anytime, anywhere) through educational and instructional technology.  All students who apply for the Cougar Virtual Academy will have access to a quality curriculum that will meet their individual needs.  Applications will be reviewed by the Cougar Virtual Academy application committee.

The Cougar Virtual Academy students in grades 5-12 will interact with the digital content provided by Edgenuity.  Edgenuity is a standards-aligned digital curriculum that provides instruction, support, and test preparation.   It also provides teacher academic support by providing students with additional delivery of instruction by a virtual teacher.   On-site teachers will  act as facilitators of learning, rather than providing direct instruction.  These teachers will have office hours from 3:30-5:30 pm.  During this time they will be available to provide additional  academic and social and emotional support for our virtual students.  The expectation for teaching and learning will be a blended approach.

Instructional Expectations:
The expectation is that each student will login daily for attendance with scheduled meetings with their assigned teacher in the Cougar Virtual Academy. During these scheduled meetings the student and their assigned teacher will discuss their progress, provide any necessary skill review, and provide any other needed support to the student.

Participation Expectations:

Students will be expected to login and be an active participant in the learning process.

Approach for Delivery:
The HWHSD will provide asynchronous learning for designated classes.  CTE courses,  will be delivered through blended learning.  Students enrolled in CTE classes will receive virtual  instruction through various platforms and will come to campus for face-to-face classes  as needed and/or on scheduled built in day for student support.

What delivery approach will the school or district utilize to meet the needs of both teachers and students (i.e., virtual (online) / remote (distance) or blended (hybrid)? Please explain.

The delivery approach in our virtual academy will be virtual (online), remote (distance) for most courses. CTE courses will be offered through blended learning (Grades 7-12). Students will come on campus for any state-required testing, health screening, and for instructional support. Students will come on campus to attend AAA competitive activity classes such as, but not limited to, art, choir, band, baseball, basketball, cheerleading, volleyball, track, and football.

Will teachers be dedicated to primarily remote instruction or serving in a dual role, teaching both remote and in-person learners?
Â *If teachers will serve in a dual role, describe whether it will be simultaneously, meaning remote and in-person at the same time with course/schedule specific considerations.

Each student is assigned a virtual academy teacher. The teacher's role is to support the student with their online education in the Cougar Virtual Learning Program. This includes monitoring student progress, attendance, and engagement and (as well as) making recommendations for student intervention (and enrichment) when necessary.

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| Describe the expectation for teacher instruction, interaction, and frequency with virtual students. | Teacher Instruction:<br>Each student in grades 5-12 is assigned a Cougar Virtual Academy teacher. The teacher's role is to support the student with their online education in the Cougar Virtual Academy. This includes monitoring student progress, attendance, and engagement and making recommendations for student intervention when necessary.<br><br>Interaction with Students:<br>Specifications include the following: Teachers will have office hours from 3:30 - 5:30 pm for virtual students to receive assistance and to communicate academically and/or discuss any areas of concerns.<br><br>Frequency with Virtual Students:<br>Students will be required to log in a minimum of 2 times a week. If the child does not log in for office hours, the parent will be contacted with documentation kept and a meeting to determine the student's continuation in the program. |
| If utilizing district waivers for **class size**, what supports will the district put in place to support the teacher and students? How will the district monitor and determine if the supports are adequate for teachers who exceed class size in digital learning settings? | Teachers of record for virtual students will follow DESE's rules for class size. Helena -West Helena School District will not be applying for this waiver. |
| If utilizing district waivers for **teaching load**, what supports will the district put in place to support the teacher and students? How will the district monitor and determine if the supports are adequate for teachers who exceed teaching loads in digital learning settings? | Teaching loads for virtual classes will follow DESE's rules for teaching load. Helena West Helena School District will not be applying for this waiver. |

## Technology / Platforms

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| Identify the learning management system/content management system that schools and districts will use? (Canvas, Buzz, Google Classroom, etc.) | Teachers will facilitate learning utilizing the Edgenuity learning management system in conjunction with Google Classroom and Schoology. |

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| Describe the digital content that will be available to students, including any digital curriculum and supports that are available to teachers. If the district is using a content management system (CMS), please specify grades levels and subjects that the CMS will address. | Teachers will facilitate learning utilizing content from Edgenuity. Courseware curriculum is grounded in research and aligned to state standards. Courses combine direct-instruction videos featuring expert, on-screen teachers with rigorous assignments, performance tasks, and assessments to engage students and ensure subject-area mastery. |
| What video communication software is required for any remote student? Please describe the video communication software the teacher will use to facilitate live conferences between two or more participants. | During the teachers' office hours, they will use Zoom video communication software or Google Meet to communicate with students. Software is included on the teacher and student devices provided by the district. |
| Describe the technology access (device and connectivity) that will be provided to each digital learning student to ensure each student receives a free public education. | Student Supports:<br>The district provides a Chromebook to all students participating in the Cougar Virtual Academy. Students with limited or no connectivity will be provided a district-owned hotspot. All district devices are monitored using Go Guardian and filters are in place to meet the provisions outlined in the Children's Information Protection Act. Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) \| Federal Communications Commission (fcc.gov)<br>The HWHSD Technology Department is available for support to students and families during school hours via phone or email. The technology department will be available for troubleshooting during school hours. |

## Student Supports

Describe the manner and frequency the district or school will use to monitor the wellness and safety (food security, physical, mental health, etc.) of students in a total remote setting. (This may be in-person, video communication, etc.). Identify supports available to assist students within the district.

Manner for monitoring wellness and safety:
To ensure that families are prepared for the learning from home, the Cougar Virtual Academy will require every virtual student and parent or guardian to attend a program entrance orientation. During this event parents/guardians will be instructed in grade reporting, strategies for monitoring student progress, and important academic and social-emotional milestones at each grade level. The district will make every effort to offer parents in unique situations alternative meeting arrangements utilizing our social worker and other district resources. In order to ensure computer usage safety, the Cougar Virtual Academy's teacher will utilize Go Guardian to maintain a virtual safe environment. Go Guardian is a district policy adopted program that monitors usage for engagement and safety.

Frequency of wellness and safety checks:
Wellness and safety checks will be done in real-time as the teacher is virtually interacting and engaging the students and monitoring the students. The checks will be done also in a more structured process on a weekly basis through video conferencing and/or phone conferencing by the teacher, social worker, or behavioral interventionist as situations and/or circumstances occur.

Describe the manner and frequency the district or school will use to monitor the academic and student engagement in a virtual setting. Describe the additional supports available for students struggling with engagement.

The teachers will report on the progress of students weekly. Each interim (Every 4 Weeks), student progress will be assessed and a determination will be made whether the student should remain a virtual student, receive TIER II interventions, or need any additional support to assist the student in being successful in the virtual academy. Additional support such as virtual tutoring, home visits, calls from teachers to parents and students, etc. The TIER I and TIER II interventions will be provided in a blended approach depending on the needs of the students.

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| Describe the Academic Response to Intervention plan for remote (virtual) students, including additional supports and personnel. | Students will have the opportunity to communicate with their teacher during the teacher's office hours from 3:30-5:30 p.m. During TIER I time, teachers will provide live mini-lessons and recorded lessons and communication concerning expectations for the week. TIER II support will include break room tutoring, small group activities, etc.<br><br>TIER II interventions will be provided by the Reading Interventionists. |
| Describe the district or school's formative assessment plan to support student learning. | The District virtual teachers will use the current formative assessment plan in place which is embedded in the district's curriculum. The curriculum documents are aligned with state standards. PLCs will review formative assessment data to determine the next instructional steps based on students' needs. Students will be administered the formative assessments virtually in a blended format.<br>As well as, instructional support will be provided by the Instructional Facilitators in the manner that fits the need of the student.<br><br>Instructional support will be provided by the Instructional Facilitators.<br>The use of Go Guardian helps teachers to be more adept at monitoring and supporting individual students' computer use, any distractions, and to monitor their work habits/engagement.<br>Click HWH Curriculum to view documents at https://www.hwh.grsc.k12.ar.us/ |
| Describe how dyslexia screening and services will be provided to digital learning students. | Universal and Level 1 screenings are done virtually and in-person based on the procedure of the assessment. Level II screeners are completed in person. A state-approved dyslexia program is implemented and services are provided based on the program recommendations. Virtual students interventions are scheduled based on the amount of support needed. Dyslexia Interventionists and Reading Interventionists will use a virtual platform to deliver instructions and provide supplemental materials. The Helena West Helena School District will ensure that all Dyslexia Law requirements will be followed. |

Describe how Gifted and Talented supports and services will be provided to digital learning students.

Identification- Referral forms will be online, but testing will have to be face-to-face or at an agreed-upon location (community center/church) where a licensed GT teacher can assess using 2 subjective and 2 objective instruments.

Students in grades 5-6 will receive (Resource Room) virtual synchronous learning with a Gifted and Talented certified teacher at least 150 minutes a week.

Students in grades 7-12 will receive virtual learning through a Collegeboard certified or ATP (Additional Training Plan) waivered teacher using a platform that has been approved by DESE. At least one Pre-AP class will be offered per grade (7-10) and at least one core (math, social science, English, science) Advanced Placement class will be offered.

There will not be a separate orientation, AP classes will be discussed during the same orientation. The compact/contract that the parents and students sign for the Cougar Virtual Academy will include the information about AP and Pre-AP classes. Helena West Helena School District will ensure that the GT Program Approval Standards will be followed for virtual students.

Describe how English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL / ESL) supports and services will be provided to digital learning students.

The district will continue to provide equitable and meaningful access to content instruction through academic language development, delivered by a collaborative model at the elementary level and a targeted services model at the secondary level.

The goals to provide supports and services to ESOL/ESL/ELL students are to:

1)   Provide ongoing one-on-one check-ins to address language-specific questions or concerns regarding digital learning progress as needed,

2)   Provide academic language development through a collaborative teaching model that embeds language within content or subject, and

3)   Provide ongoing language-specific, one-on-one support to ESOL/ESL virtual students to ensure individual mastery of grade-level content.
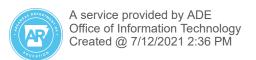
All language screeners and assessments (ELPA21) will be given face-to-face according to the rules governing English Language Learner 3)   Differentiate instruction for subjects (virtually via Zoom or Google Hangout). This could include, but is not limited to blended platform to deliver instructions and provide supplemental materials.

  In order to meet these goals, teachers will:

a)   The delivered instruction includes language development opportunities

b)   Create language-specific mini-lessons that support the content learning that will be included in the instruction given by the virtual teacher (videos/language development software programs)

c)   Provide instructional modifications, such as visual supports, specific academic language, background building, etc.

d)   Supporting daily oral language practice opportunities

4)   Engage students through one-on-one check-ins weekly

5)   Be available to students daily to address any immediate needs via the classroom platform communication tool

6)   Develop further instruction, resources, and/or materials for students on an as-needed basis

7)   Collect evidence of student mastery or growth toward mastery of specific academic language needs

8)   Contact parent and ELLCoordinator when there is evidence a student is struggling to engage in online learning for that course/subject/grade level.

9) On-going communication with the parent through Remind, text, email, written correspondence translated as needed.

Other Expectations:

1)   Collaborate weekly with classroom/subject (content) area teachers to differentiate instruction (virtually via Zoom or Google Hangout). This could include, but is not limited to:

a)   Plan the instruction to include language development opportunities

b)   Creating language-specific mini-lessons that support the content learning that will be included in the instruction given by the teacher (videos)

c)   Providing insight into instructional modifications, such as visual supports, specific academic language, background building, etc.

d)   Supporting daily oral language practice opportunities

2)   Engage students through one-on-one conversations at least 3 times each week-30 minutes a day to support their classroom learning needs to be targeted at their language proficiency level (using a virtual collaboration platform such

at their language proficiency level (using a virtual collaboration platform such as Google Meets/Zoom)

3)    Develop further instruction, resources, and/or materials for students on an as-needed basis

4)    Collect evidence of student mastery or growth toward mastery of specific academic language needs bi-quarterly

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Describe how all Special Education services and supports will be provided to digital learning students, including the process for special education evaluations and conferences.

Special Education services and supports will be provided using the learning management system (Google Classroom). When appropriate, supplemental programs (Mindplay Reading Coach, IXL, I Ready, Read 180, System 44, Readworks, APEX, etc.) are used paired with individualized instructions in breakout sessions. Occupational therapy, physical therapy, and speech therapy services and supports are provided using a virtual platform by district contracted personnel, and a skill bag for each type of service received is provided to students for home use.  Evaluations are done in person. Conferences are held in person, by phone, or using a virtual platform at the request of the parent or committee consensus.  Special education will be provided based on IDEA's rules and regulations as well as following the student's IEP.

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Describe common and frequently used digital accommodations that the district or school has provided to general education teachers to assist students in digital learning classes.

All students are provided with a Chromebook with access to a content management system based on the grade level and student proficiency with technology. Teachers have access to universal tools such as calculators, note-taking, highlighting tools, text to speech, and digital libraries such as Capstone and Abdo. Teachers across the district have been provided with the following training:

Technology
1. Google Classroom
2. Digital Tools
3. Online Learning
4. Virtual Strategies
5. Edgenuity
6. Schoology

Instructional - by the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET) provided training on the following (HWHSD is in a three (3) year initiative with NIET):
1. Virtual Instructional Strategies Training (District-Wide through Virtual)
2. Virtual Strategies in Environment Learning Walks for Administrators (On-site with principals)
3. Learning Walks and Strength-Based Coaching with District and Building Leadership

Service Providers:
Provided training for the elementary staff in August 2020.
1. Setting up Google Classroom/Google Meet Classes.
2. Zoom Account set up
3. Introduction and usage of online instructional components such as Edpuzzle, Quizizz, IReady, IXL, etc.
4. Production of instructional Videos for students.
5. Parent Communication Apps
6. Solution Tree Provided training August 2020.
"All Still Means All", Effective Instruction in a Virtual Setting."
7. Bridging Face to Face and Remote Instruction(Student Engagement).
8. Motivating and Engaging Students in a Remote Environment.
9. Usage of EdPuzzle (Advanced)
10. Cross Over Activities Google Slides, Google Docs,Choice Board, PearDeck with devices.


Service Provider #1: The service provider gave three days of training to the staff at Central High School on July 14,15, and 16 2020:
1. Day #1 Content:
-Arkansas Ready for Learning
-Blended Learning
-Learning Management System (LMS)-Google Classroom/LMS (Docs, Slides, Forms, Meet, and Voice
1. Day #2 Content:

1. Day #2 Content:
   -Finish any Content Remaining from day 1
   -Zoom Account Setup
   -Zoom Exploration
   -Zoom Meetings with Colleague (partners)
   -Next Steps (preparing to plan for blended
    learning via pivoting perspective

2. Day #3 Content:
   -Finish any content remaining from day 2
   -Explore students working on assignments
    online in Google Classroom
   -Using split screens during blended learning
   -Lesson Planning for Blended Learning

Service Provider #2 The service provided training on
Blended Learning Professional Development
- We explored blended learning strategies
- Student engagement during virtual learning
- Technology tools ( flipgrid, screencastify, google
  extension)

## Teacher Supports

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| Describe district and school supports to provide on-going digital content and instructional supports for teachers. | The district and schools have provided ongoing job-embedded professional development focused on digital content and instructional supports. Including but not limited to: <br>● Great Rivers Education Service Cooperative provide supports in professional development in various areas <br>● the technology technician provides professional development to teachers on needed technology topics, <br>● Technology training: <br>1. Google Classroom <br>2. Digital Tools <br>3. Online Learning <br>4. Virtual Strategies <br>5. Edgenuity <br>6. Schoology |

LEA INSIGHTS

| Identify the daily or weekly amount of time teachers will need to develop and plan for instruction based on options selected and digital supports provided. How will the district support teachers with digital content and planning? | Teachers will use planning time from 3:30 to 5:30 P.M. daily to interact with students, monitor student progress, provide intervention, and virtual office hours. Teachers will be expected to develop a virtual schedule to meet the needs of the students. The virtual schedule will be posted on the website. |

## District Supports

| Describe how the district will ensure equitable access to opportunities for success for digital learner's needs (poverty, homelessness, migrant, foster care, and military connected students) A link (URL) to the district equity plan may be acceptable if it meets this criteria. | HWHSD does not discriminate against any student or parent on the basis of race, color, sex, nationality, or disability in any of the policies, practices, or procedures. The application process will be solely based on equitable criteria and all decisions of entry into the virtual academy will be criteria-based.<br>● Coordination with district support service programs, including Special Education, Gifted and Talented, 504, ESL<br>● Equal access to technology devices and support in connectivity, such as providing MiFi devices, internet services, etc. |
| All students are expected to test (statewide summative assessments) onsite as per DESE guidance. Provide an overview of how the district may communicate to parents and test digital learning students at a district site. | All digital students will meet testing requirements on-site. Flexible testing platform, schedule, location, and time will be provided to all virtual students such as after hours and public settings and homes with safety measures provided.<br>Various communication platforms will be used such as phone blasts, Facebook, reminder app, personal phone calls to communicate with parents. Discussion of this requirement will be on the parent orientation agenda. |
| Provide a detailed explanation of how the district will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the digital option(s) and the fidelity of implementation as described within this application. | In order to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the virtual learning program, the district will:<br>● conduct student learning surveys in the first week of the program to determine student support needs and survey to reassess those needs at interim to determine needed interventions, behavior support, social-emotional support, and academic support<br>● survey parents after each orientation session to determine immediate needs and develop supportive plans<br>● analyze student data for adequate academic progress through classroom grades, STAR Testing, IReady Testing, ACT Aspire, Interim assessments, and diagnostic testing<br>● conduct virtual teacher surveys |

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| Describe how the teacher(s) will engage families into the digital learning process. (District may link the District Engagement Plan if digital learning is included. The plan must address how the district will support parents/students with digital tools and resources) | Upon completion of each survey, data will be examined by the district leadership team to determine modifications and program changes.<br><br>Orientation will be provided for parents and students before school begins and multiple training sessions will be provided throughout the school year. Family orientation was a key component in the development of the HWHSD Digital Learning Plan. During the 2020-21 school year, we conducted multiple parent digital training sessions and will continue this practice during the 2021-22 school year.<br>This was successful when pivoting to digital in 2020-21 and we will continue this process of family engagement.  Parent Digital Training Sessions will be posted on the district's website along with phone blasts and the schools' Facebook page.<br>To access the Parent Digital Training Sessions go to the district website https://www.hwlink h.grsc.k12.ar.us/ and click on Calendar-View Events.<br>Parents are called Learning Partners in the Cougar Virtual Academy to identify the role of parents in the student's virtual learning experience.<br>Teachers and Parents will communicate throughout the process to ensure transparency, student success, and the Cougar Virtual Academy's effectiveness. Parents will have access to the student's Eschool information to monitor their student's progress and will utilize the Remind App to communicate in addition to traditional communication such as phone calls, emails, letters, and in-person conferences. |
| Provide the URL to evidence of the local school board's approval of the waiver request(s). | https://core-docs.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/asset/uploaded_file/1272606/ |
| Provide a URL to evidence of stakeholder feedback regarding the waiver request(s) and the district communication plan regarding digital learning program(s). | Helena-West Helena School District sought feedback from various statkeholders |

## Policies

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| Please provide a link (URL) to the attendance policy for digital learning students. | The expectation is that each student will log in daily for attendance with schedul |
| Please provide a link (URL) to the discipline policy for digital learning students. | Digital students will follow the Discipline Policy for onsite students.https://core-d |

| Please provide a link (URL) to the grading policy for digital learning students. | Digital students will follow the grading policy for onsite students.https://core-do |

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