



**DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY
& SECONDARY EDUCATION**

Act 1240 Waiver Request

District:	Camden Fairview
LEA Number:	5204000
Superintendent:	Johnny Embry
Email:	jembry@cfsd.k12.ar.us
Contact for Waiver:	Johnny Embry
Contact Email:	jembry@cfsd.k12.ar.us
Contact Phone:	(870) 836-4193
Date Received by DESE:	

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

Topic:	Start Date Waiver
Standards/Statutes/Rules:	A.C.A 6-10-106
Duration Requested:	5 years
Name of Open-Enrollment Charter Holding the Waiver	Arkansas Virtual Academy Arkansas Connections
Schools, Grades or Classes the Wavier Will Apply To	Camden Fairview School District, all grades.
PURPOSE OF THE WAIVER (Must check at least one)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Enhance Student Learning Opportunities <input 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.

Camden Fairview School District (CFSD), separately and collectively with other member districts of the Southeastern Education Service Cooperative, is requesting a waiver from A.C.A 6-10-106, which establishes the first allowable day of class as the Monday of the week containing August 19. For the 2024-25 school year, that date will be Monday, August 19. CFSD is requesting a waiver specifically to set the district's first day of class earlier than Monday, August 12.

As presently constructed, A.C.A 6-10-106 results in a wide range of allowable opening dates of school. At the earliest, classes may start on August 14, which was the case in the fall of 2023. The latest possible first day is August 20. The requested waiver will allow the district to begin classes on the same relative date as the 2023-2024 school year.

This waiver will allow the district to enhance student learning opportunities and increase equitable access to effective teachers in the following ways.

- With the requested waiver, the district has the flexibility to create a calendar with fall and spring semesters closer to the same length.
 - Calendars with unbalanced semesters create issues for classes that are one 9-week period and one semester in length, which can result in both diminished learning opportunities and less time with teachers for students during the shorter class periods.
 - To avoid unbalanced semesters, the district could extend the fall semester until after Christmas break. This is not an ideal solution either, as it results in students taking their final exams short after an extended break from school and increases the possibility of exams being repeated or postponed due to winter weather.
- With the requested waiver, the district will have a greater likelihood of ending classes in late May rather than extending into June. Some research indicates a decrease in student learning when instruction takes place after the Memorial Day holiday.
- An earlier start date will allow students increased days of instruction before spring testing. More days of instruction will enhance student learning opportunities and time spent with teachers.
- An earlier start date will allow the district increased flexibility to create a calendar that embeds professional development training throughout the school year. This will allow the district to strengthen educator capacity and increase equitable access to effective teachers for students.

- Activities will begin next fall on the same relative date as they did this fall, with or without the waiver. Therefore, a large number of students will already be on campus to practice and prepare for the activities, regardless of the opening date of school. This will impact students who participate in football, golf, tennis, cross country, volleyball, band, cheer, dance, ROTC, and Student Council.

The granting of this waiver will allow the district the flexibility to create a calendar that most closely resembles previous district calendars, with balanced semesters, the maximum number of instructional days before spring testing, embedded professional development days throughout the year, and inclement weather days.

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

The granting of this waiver will not affect any other law, rule or procedure. The school year will remain the same length. Granting this waiver simply allows the district to create a school calendar that is structured as closely as possible to the current one and avoid the dramatic changes to the calendar which will be necessary without the waiver.

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

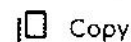
The district will continue to monitor student and staff attendance and student learning in the classroom.

Board resolution approving waiver request. Please see the attached resolution.

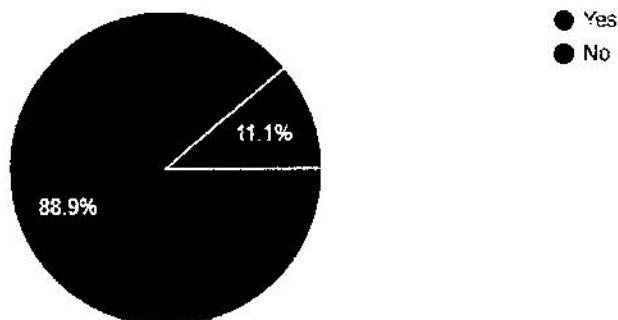
Evidence of stakeholder involvement, including teachers and student families. The district conducted two surveys the week of January 8, 2024: one survey for district employees and one survey for families and community stakeholders. Both surveys explained the benefits of obtaining the early start date waiver and asked if participants supported an early start date. A strong majority of both groups supported an early start date.

135 participants completed the employee survey, with 88.9% in favor of an early start date.

Do you support CFSD's preferred start date of Wednesday, August 14, 2024?



135 responses

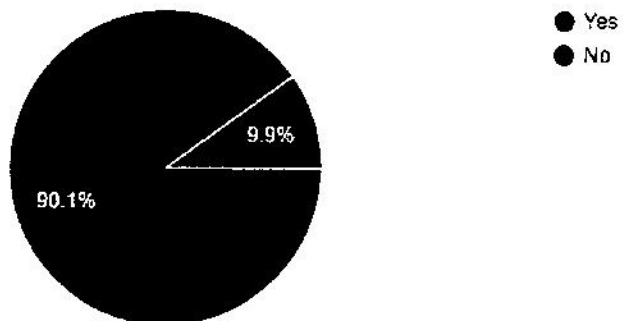


262 participants completed the family/community stakeholder survey, with 90.1% in favor of an early start date

Do you support CFSD's preferred start date of Wednesday, August 14, 2024?

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262 responses



**CERTIFIED COPY OF THE RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF
CAMDEN FAIRVIEW SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 16 OF OUACHITA COUNTY
ADOPTED AT THE BOARD'S REGULAR MEETING OF DECEMBER 19, 2023**

WHEREAS, the Board of Education of Camden Fairview School District (hereafter, "CFSD") met in regular session on December 19, 2023, at 6:30 p.m. in Garrison Auditorium in Camden, Arkansas; and,

WHEREAS, Arkansas law provides for the school year to begin no earlier than the Monday of the week containing August 19th; and,

WHEREAS, under this law the start of school varies from year to year, beginning some years as early as August 14th or as late as August 20th; and,

WHEREAS, under this law the earliest the 2024-2025 school year can begin is August 19th; and,

WHEREAS, a late start to the school year creates unbalanced semesters, reduces the preparation time for state testing, and limits flexibility in scheduling embedded professional development in clement weather makeup days; and,

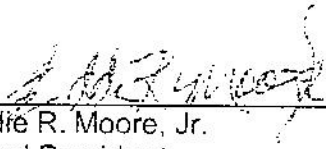
WHEREAS, Arkansas law allows school districts to request from the Arkansas State Board of Education a waiver from complying with certain state laws, including the statute governing school start dates; and,

WHEREAS, CFSD Superintendent Johnny Embry desires to request that the Arkansas State Board of Education grant CFSD a waiver that would allow CFSD to begin the 2024-2025 school year no earlier than August 12, 2024; and,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Camden Fairview School District Board of Education authorizes Superintendent Embry to request that the Arkansas State Board of Education grant CFSD a waiver allowing CFSD to begin the 2024-2025 school year no earlier than August 12, 2024, and recommends its approval by the Arkansas State

Board of Education.


Adopted this 19th day of December, 2023.



Eddie R. Moore, Jr.
Board President

CERTIFICATION

The undersigned, Ben Goss, Secretary of the Board of Education of Camden Fairview School District No. 16 of Ouachita County, Arkansas, hereby certifies that the above and foregoing resolution was considered and adopted by said board at its regular meeting of December 19, 2023.



Ben Goss
Board Secretary