



**DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY  
& SECONDARY EDUCATION**

## **Act 1240 Waiver Request**

<b>District:</b>	<b>Springdale School District</b>
<b>LEA Number:</b>	7207000
<b>Superintendent:</b>	Dr. Jared Cleveland
<b>Email:</b>	jcleveland@sdale.org
<b>Contact for Waiver:</b>	Kendra Clay
<b>Contact Email:</b>	kclay@sdale.org
<b>Contact Phone:</b>	479-750-8800
<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 #2

<b>Topic:</b>	Class Size and Teaching Load
<b>Standards/Statutes/Rules:</b>	Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-812  DESE Rules Governing Class Size and Teaching Load  DESE Standards for Accreditation 1-A.5 DESE Standards for Accreditation 1-A.6
<b>Duration Requested:</b>	5 years
<b>Name of Open-Enrollment Charter Holding the Waiver</b>	EStem
<b>Schools, Grades or Classes the Wavier Will Apply To</b>	Districtwide K-12
<b>PURPOSE OF THE WAIVER (Must check at least one)</b>	<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.**

Every decision made in the Springdale School District is made in the best interests of students. At the elementary level (grades K-5), there are times throughout the school year when a student enrolls and his/her attendance zone school does not have an available seat in the student's grade. If this occurs, students are transferred to another elementary school in the district that has an opening. The district has developed an efficient system to transfer students based on the existing high school feeder patterns. When space within the feeder patterns does not exist, the District transfers students across feeder patterns. This process is not efficient. Allowing teachers to hold no more than 2 students over at any time will reduce the number of students who must be transferred from their attendance zone school mid semester. The District will continue to plan staffing for the current class size requirements but will use the waiver to accommodate overages that occur mid-semester. Allowing flexibility for class sizes will enhance student learning opportunities and increase equitable access to effective teachers by eliminating travel times for transfer students.

At the secondary level (grades 6-12), there are times when scheduling prohibits students from taking certain classes that the student wants to take. With a waiver of class size and teaching load, a maximum of 2 additional students per class (and therefore 12 additional students to the teaching load) would be allowed when scheduling necessitates the overage. The District will continue to plan staffing for the current class size requirements but will use the waiver to accommodate scheduling conflicts. Allowing flexibility for class size and teaching load will enhance student learning opportunities by allowing students to take classes that they requested and are interested in rather than being assigned to a class with an opening.

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

As described above, the class size and teaching load waiver will allow the best possible instruction to occur for students by limiting transfers at the elementary level and allowing students to take classes of their choosing at the secondary level.

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

This will be measured by the number of student transfers (decrease from current numbers) and the number of student course requests being filled.

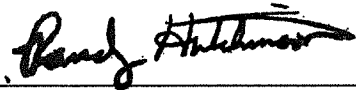
**SPRINGDALE SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**Act 1240 Waiver Resolution**

WHEREAS, Act 1240 of 20015; Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-103, authorizes public school districts to petition the State Board of Education for all or some of the waivers granted to an open-enrollment charter school;

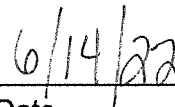
WHEREAS, the students in the Springdale School District would benefit from waivers of licensure and class size and teaching load as outlined in the Act 1240 Waiver Request Form presented to the Board.

WHEREAS, feedback on the waiver request was sought from teachers and families of students;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Directors of Springdale School District No. 50 (the "District) authorizes the administration of the Springdale School District to petition the State Board of Education for waivers of licensure and class size and teaching load.



Randy Hutchinson, President



Date

Questions/concerns/comments	Answers
*Does this increase the overall maximum number of students per high school teacher from 150 to 162?	Potentially, yes, but I do not anticipate 162 being the norm. (Kendra Clay)
*This seems like a lot to add to the plate of teachers...we will be teaching more students, working longer hours, and many will have less collaborative time. If we are submitting a waiver to add students per teacher, can a waiver not also be submitted to decrease instructional time so that we do not have to add 10 minutes to each day next year?	Teachers will be working the same number of hours. Yes, instructional time will be increasing but the overall hours teacher contract hours are the same. (Kendra Clay)
How will the district ensure this will not be abused?	Overages in class size will be approved at the central office. (Kendra Clay)
Feedback: I am completely against increasing class sizes for any reason. With the behavior issues we have now a days, the class sizes we have already gives us many children with major behaviors. These behaviors are especially seen in kindergarten when some children have never been to school before. If they force us to do this, I would definitely want to see an aide per grade level.  I also think a "waiver" for something is just a slippery slope to making it the new rule before too long.  I also think increasing class size is not the way to retain teachers with a teacher shortage looming.	Thank you for the feedback. We understand and appreciate your concerns and do not anticipate exceeding typical class sizes to become the norm. (Kendra Clay)
There are space constraints in our older buildings that have less square footage for classrooms. It is already a physical space limit at 30 students.	Thank you for the feedback. Space will have to be considered in assessing whether to put extra students in a class. (Kendra Clay)
Are teachers who have additional students going to receive a stipend? This would be a way to guarantee oversight and make up for the additional work put on teachers.	No, the oversight will come from central office approval. (Kendra Clay)
Adding 2 students...would that mean for HS teachers...150 + 152 for overall load? Or 148 + 2 would = 150. In other words, what is the directive on how it affects total HS teacher caseloads? We may have someone completely balanced in no overages in each class, but then what about total...make sense?	Overall load is the total number of students a teacher teaches. Most teachers will maintain the total current teaching load of a max of 150. With the additional 2 students, the total number could be 162, but we do not anticipate this being the norm. (Kendra Clay)
What are other districts similar in size to Springdale doing to combat this problem? What is the force transfer system in other districts similar in size?	I believe the process is similar across most districts with more than one elementary school. For districts with only one elementary school, they typically ask the State Board for a waiver of class size. (Kendra Clay)
Is there a max. amount of time you can be over with 2 students?	No. (Kendra Clay)
We have students that cannot read!!! If anything, we need smaller classes, to make sure that all students get the individual attention that they so desperately need.	We do not anticipate exceeding typical class sizes becoming the norm. Smaller class sizes would be great if funding were available. (Kendra Clay)
Does PPC or the staff get to vote on this?	Not a vote to determine whether it moves forward or not but we are seeking feedback through this sheet. (Kendra Clay)
Can the waiver have specific language for what it will be used for? When does this waiver expire?	It does have specific language and an expiration period. See waiver document <a href="#">here</a> . (Kendra Clay)
Who is making the decision to apply for the waiver? Is it classroom teachers, or people that have not been in the classroom and do not know the many issues that will result from having more students in our classrooms?	The Central Office Team, led by Dr. Cleveland, made the decision to explore the waivers. All central office team members have classroom experience except me (Kendra) and Jeremy White. We have considered what having more students in a classroom could mean. We have also considered how to solve the problem of not having enough open seats available for students and how to solve that problem at a district level. Class size overages will not become the norm for every teacher. We continue to remain open to other solutions for solving class size overages mid-semester. (Kendra Clay)
As a long-time teacher in our district, this Class-Size waiver is concerning to me based on past experiences. From 2013-2018, my class load ranged from 160-168 students in 6th grade even though the law stated that 150 students was the maximum load for core teachers in grades 7-12. Even though we brought this to the attention of our administrators that it was clear that we were not following the spirit of the state's caseload law, we felt like our concerns as Science and Social Studies teachers were ignored. We all want what is best for kids, but going over the state mandated limits does not seem to me what is best for student learning or for our teachers. Please see attached links.  1. Will there be some oversight throughout the district if this waiver is approved? 2. Will teachers who have caseload overages be compensated according to the law? See. 4.03 <a href="https://www.arkleg.state.ar.us/Calendars/Attachment?committee=040&amp;agenda=708&amp;file=D1e+ADF+Class+Size+and+Teaching+Load+and+Act+243+of+2018.pdf">https://www.arkleg.state.ar.us/Calendars/Attachment?committee=040&amp;agenda=708&amp;file=D1e+ADF+Class+Size+and+Teaching+Load+and+Act+243+of+2018.pdf</a>  Also, here are some facts regarding teacher to student ratio and student learning. <a href="https://www.publicschoolreview.com/blog/how-important-is-the-student-teacher-ratio-for-students">https://www.publicschoolreview.com/blog/how-important-is-the-student-teacher-ratio-for-students</a>	I cannot address class size overages that happened between 2013-2018. Teachers will not be compensated for the overages. All the other concerns have been addressed above. Here is a link to the <a href="#">current class size rules</a> . The link provided is out of date but most of the provisions are the same. (Kendra Clay)
Are the concerns/feedback within this document going to be shared with the school board?	Yes, and the State Board of Education
A.) Did the district apply for a waiver regarding classroom size because teachers asked for an additional two students? Or did people outside the classroom apply for the waiver?	We have not applied for the waiver yet. Please see line 14 above for information about the classroom experiences of those pursuing the waiver request. There are times when teachers ask to hold a student over the class size ratio. For example, if a student moves out of the attendance zone mid-year, the teacher cannot keep the student if there is not an open seat in the classroom. (Kendra Clay)
B.) Why do decisions that impact classroom teachers NOT involve classroom teachers?	Feedback is being sought through this sheet. (Kendra Clay)
Before increasing class sizes are we going to reevaluate the out of district transfers as well as in district transfers that don't have justified reasoning. Ex. will zoned children and staff children be given priority in schools before transfer students are allowed to stay that are from other districts or schools (unless there is an extenuating circumstance)? Has this been looked at when considering waivers for increased class sizes?	All transfers are dependent on available space. (Kendra Clay)
Feedback regarding licensure waiver: Waiving the need for a current teacher license in any case disregards the professional skills of teachers. Teachers study for years to perfect their art. Teachers aren't born; they are made. To allow someone without a license to instruct students on a full-time basis directly contradicts the hours of training, practice, feedback, professional development, and ongoing personal learning that Springdale teachers complete. Additionally, there are several programs available for people who have had non-education careers and want to become educators. This waiver is unnecessary and offensive to those of us who strive for professionalism.	see licensure tab

Questions/concerns/comments	Answers
<p>Feedback regarding class sizes: I teach at a middle school. Next year all teachers will have a 50-55 minute block of class time with a total of 6 class periods/day. That means, if every class was full to the brim, we would have 180 students/teacher load. That would be well over the maximum required course load for secondary (150 students/day). In other words, middle school teachers would be over the limit well before each block was full of the maximum of 30 students. To add a potential 2 additional students would egregiously stress not just the law and best practice but also the physical limitations of the room. I teach with a small desk and little additional furniture or "fun" seating. I still struggle to fit 28 growing bodies into my room while allowing students to see the Newline board. Fitting an entire additional table in my classroom would not allow for all students to see. That's before we start to figure out where to seat students to accommodate for IEPs and 504 plans. Then consider the few every year who need glasses but don't have them for whatever reason, the kids who don't get along, and the friends that don't work well together. Appropriately 32 students in a middle school room quickly becomes an impossible situation to seat so that all can learn. Then, consider the additional work providing timely feedback to students. Grading 150 assignments quickly enough to be meaningful to instruction is already a difficult challenge. There is no need to add to that pile. In two of my current classes I teach 26-28 kids. I'm less effective in providing them detailed, specific, actionable feedback than I am in my smaller classes. A teacher is only one person. We already work as hard as we can to give the world to our students. To stretch our teachers thinner than they already are would negatively impact Springdale's students. It would impact the disadvantaged ones the most. (We understand some of these things have been addressed above, but if this is the only place for feedback we want to provide our full, current thoughts and concerns.)</p>	<p>There would not be a case where 180 students would be on a teacher's roster. The waiver would allow an additional 2 students per class, which at maximum would be a teaching load of 162. We do not anticipate 162 being the norm as the class size waiver would be used in limited circumstances. (Kendra Clay)</p>
<p>The teacher licensure waiver is offensive to all educators in the profession. If "highly qualified individuals" want to teach, then they need to take (and pay for) the appropriate Praxis exams. This waiver indicates that our district sees teaching as something anyone can do, when in reality, the skills needed to be a high quality educator is not something that is easy or comes naturally if you simply have the knowledge. We have all had instructors and professors who knew the material, but had no knowledge of connecting with students or presenting the material in a way that was relevant to students. This created a negative view of the subject matter. I have had many business professionals in my classroom as guest speakers, and even partnered with them on projects I have created. The first thing they all mention at the end of the day is how this job is so different and so much more difficult than they ever expected. If we want our community to treat teachers as professionals, we need to expect every teacher to maintain the status and certifications of the profession.</p>	<p>see licensure tab</p>
<p>The class size waiver seems reasonable, but again, is a bandaid for a much larger issue of paying and retaining high quality teachers. Acting like adding 2 more students per class or 12 more students per day is not a huge issue, shows teachers that there is no respect for the work we pour into every student. Twelve more students per day brings twelve more learning styles for which to differentiate, twelve more sets of deficits or gifts that impact planning for instruction, twelve more family situations to build positive relationships, twelve more behaviors that impact the success of the entire classroom. Logistically it's twelve more essays to grade and provide timely feedback, twelve more IEPs to monitor, twelve more parent/teacher conferences, twelve more students to remediate and enrich. If we do not have enough room for students, we need to think of creative solutions that do not include forcing teachers to take on more students than is legal.</p>	<p>We welcome any creative solutions for handling overages. We do not anticipate every class having an additional 2 students. (Kendra Clay)</p>

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