



Act 1240 Waiver Request

District:	Lincoln
LEA Number:	720500
Superintendent:	Mary Ann Spears
Email:	mspears@lincolncsd.com
Contact for Waiver:	Mary Ann Spears
Contact Email:	mspears@lincolncsd.com
Contact Phone:	479-824-7310 ext 105
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:	School Start Date
Standards/Statutes/Rules:	A.C.A. 6-10-106
Duration Requested:	5 years
Name of Open-Enrollment Charter Holding the Waiver	Arkansas Virtual Academy
Schools, Grades or Classes the Waiver Will Apply To	K-12
PURPOSE OF THE WAIVER (Must check at least one)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Enhance Student Learning Opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Promote Innovation <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.

The member school districts of the Northwest Arkansas Education Service Cooperative are collectively and separately requesting a waiver from A.C.A. 6-10-106, which establishes the first allowable day of class as the Monday of the week that contains August 19. For the 2024-2025 school year that date will be Monday, August 19. We would appreciate approval for the early start date for the listed schools in our region giving public schools the equity afforded to Charter Schools.

The specific waiver being requested is to allow the applying school districts to set their individual district's first day of class to be "no earlier than Monday, August 12."

The law as presently constructed results in a wide swing in the allowable opening date of school. At the earliest, it can be August 14, which was the case this year— fall of 2023. The latest possible first day is August 20 which, under the law will be — the fall of 2029. This waiver would allow the school to open next year and years to follow on the same relative date as this year.

The advantages of this waiver are several:

- The fall and spring semesters would be closer to the same length. Without this waiver, the fall semester will be 68- 1.25 days while the spring semester will be 75- 1.25 days, a difference of 7- 1.25 days. With the waiver the fall semester will be 72- 1.25 days and the spring semester 71- 1.25 days, a difference of only 1- 1.25 days. The more unbalanced the semesters are, the greater the issue for classes that are one semester in length.
- The alternative solution for unbalanced semesters is to not end the fall semester until after Christmas break. This results in final exams shortly after two weeks out of school, and the possibility of exams being repeatedly postponed due to winter weather.
- This waiver will give greater assurance of school ending in late May rather than extending into June. Some research indicates a decrease in learning past the Memorial Day Holiday.

• Beginning school earlier automatically results in more days of instruction before spring testing. More days of instruction will result in higher test scores,

• Activities such as football 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 their activities, regardless of the opening date of school. In addition to students who play football, this would include students who participate in groups such as golf, tennis, cross country, volleyball, band, cheer, dance, ROTC, Student Council, and National Honor Society, as well as others.

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

The school districts will create a calendar with an earlier start date which will provide them with more flexibility throughout the school year. The school year will remain the same length. It simply allows a district to continue with a school calendar structured as closely as possible to the current one and avoids the dramatic change to the calendar which must result without the waiver.

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

The district will monitor student assessment results and student attendance data related to the earlier start date to determine the effectiveness of the early start date.

Lincoln School District
107 E School St.
Lincoln AR 72744
January 23, 2024

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF LINCOLN SCHOOL DISTRICT AUTHORIZING THE DISTRICT TO REQUEST A WAIVER

WHEREAS, the Lincoln Board of Directors is committed to providing a high-quality education to all students within the district;

WHEREAS, certain circumstances or regulations may require the district to seek waivers to better address the unique needs or challenges faced by the district;

WHEREAS, [Include specific details regarding the waiver, such as the name of the waiver, the regulation or requirement it pertains to, and the reasons for seeking the waiver];

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of Lincoln School District hereby authorizes the district administration to formally request a 1240 waiver authorizing Lincoln School District to request August 12, 2024, as an early start date for the 2024-2025 school year. The early start date will provide the school district with these advantages:

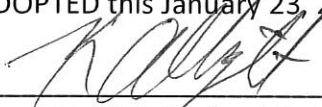
1. Even out the required days per semester to ensure exams are taking before Christmas break.
2. More instructional days prior to state testing to increase student achievement.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Superintendent or designee is authorized to take all necessary steps and actions to submit the waiver request, including providing any additional information or documentation required by the relevant authorities;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Directors expresses its support for the waiver request and acknowledges the importance of flexibility in addressing the unique needs and circumstances of the district.

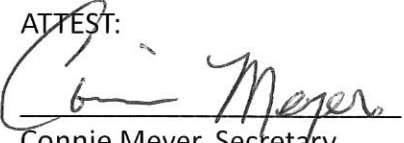
This resolution shall take effect immediately upon adoption.

ADOPTED this January 23, 2024, by the Board of Directors of Lincoln School District.



Kenneth Albright, President
Lincoln School District Board of Directors

ATTEST:

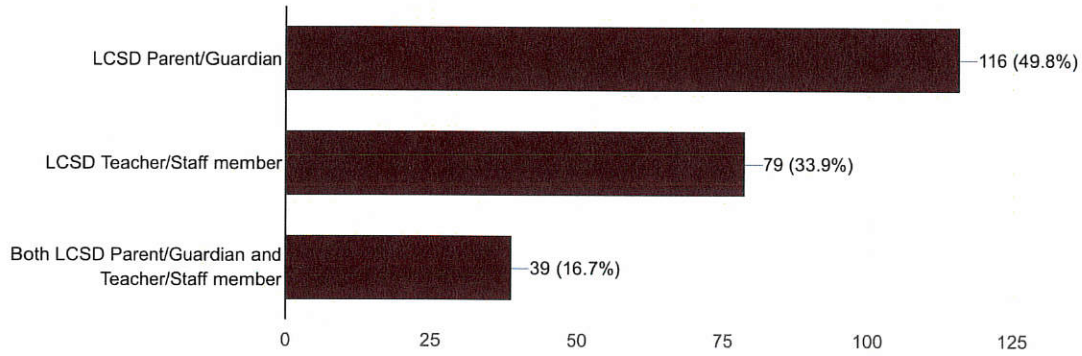


Connie Meyer, Secretary
Lincoln School District Board of Directors

1240 Waiver Request survey

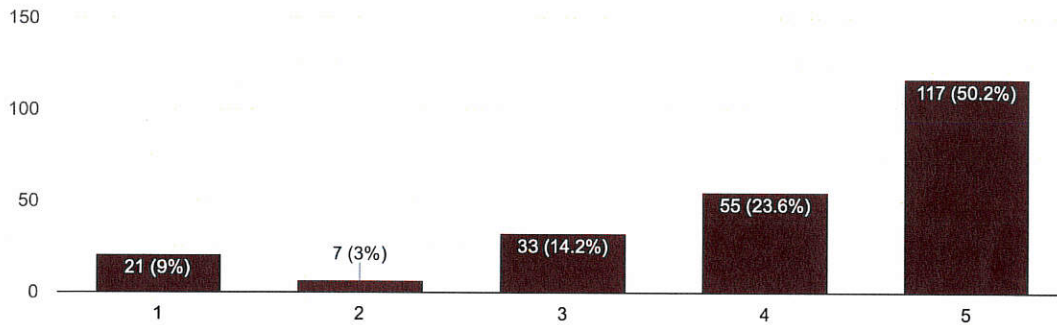
Choose one

233 responses



This waiver would allow us to balance our semesters and have more instructional days prior to state assessments. It would also help build in more ...hool's proposal to apply for an early start waiver?

233 responses



Do you support the school's decision to apply for an early start waiver to begin the 24-25 academic school year earlier than usual?

233 responses

