



**DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY
& SECONDARY EDUCATION**

Public School Waiver Request

District:	Valley View School District
LEA Number:	1612000
Superintendent:	Roland Popejoy
Email:	roland.popejoy@valleyviewschools.net
Contact for Waiver:	Ashton Cullum, District Curriculum Specialist
Contact Email:	ashton.cullum@valleyviewschools.net
Contact Phone:	870-935-6200 x 334
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(a)(1) regarding allowable first day of school
Duration Requested:	5 years
Name of Open-Enrollment Charter Holding the Waiver	Arkansas Virtual Academy
Schools, Grades or Classes the Wavier 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 Valley View School District is requesting a waiver from A.C.A. 6-10-106(a)(1), which establishes the first allowable day of student attendance as the Monday of the week that contains August 19; thus, establishing that the first day of school can be no earlier than August 14. For the 2024-2025 school year, the first allowable day under this law is Monday, August 19.

The waiver to A.C.A. 6-10-106(a)(1) is being requested to allow our school district to align the first day of school from year to year rather than being dependent on where August 19 falls in the calendar for a given year. The law as presently constructed results in a full-week swing in the allowable opening date of school. At the earliest, it can be August 14, which was the case this school year (August 2023). The latest possible first day is August 20, which will occur in the 2029-2030 school year. Approval of this waiver request would allow school to begin on the same relative date next school year and in subsequent years rather than fluctuating up to a week later due to the law.

The advantages of this waiver include, but are not limited to:

- The fall and spring semesters would have approximately the same number of instructional hours. The fall semester often has fewer school days than the spring semester, and without this waiver, the fall semester will be up to five days shorter. Unbalanced semesters result in the likelihood that there will be a greater potential for inequity in instructional outcomes for students depending on which semester a student is enrolled in semester courses. An alternative solution for the unbalanced number of days in the two semesters is to not end the fall semester until after Christmas break. In prior years when our district has had a delayed end to the first semester in January, staff have reported that students' performance on semester tests was impacted by the two weeks out of school for Christmas Break. By allowing an earlier start date with this waiver, both of these issues will be avoided.
- Approval of this waiver will make it possible for the school year to end prior to Memorial Day. District stakeholders continue to express the importance of considering all options to end the school year prior to Memorial Day due to the increase in student absences and significantly decreased learning outcomes our district has experienced in previous school years our district calendar has continued past Memorial Day.

- With the school year starting earlier than August 19, the students will have more instructional hours prior to spring testing, which will result in the students being better equipped to show their ability on the ATLAS assessments that have fixed testing windows.

- An earlier start date will better align with the Arkansas Activities Association calendar, which is largely unchanged from years past. This means that sports and activities will begin this fall on the same relative date as they have in the past, with golf season beginning on August 5, tennis season on August 12, and volleyball and football benefit games during the week of August 19. Therefore, a large number of students will already be on campus to practice and prepare for these activities, regardless of the first day of school. By allowing an earlier first day of school, students will be better prepared to perform both in the activities and in the classroom by having a normal school routine established.

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

There will be no loss of services for students under this waiver since an approval of the waiver request will only allow the school year to begin earlier to benefit students in each of the ways identified above.

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

The district will monitor student attendance data, student performance data, and curriculum data on standards covered at different points in the school year and analyze each of these measures in relation to the earlier start of the school year. Based on prior school years that have started on the dates that this waiver would allow, it is our district's expectation that aligning the first day of school from year to year rather than being dependent on where August 19 falls in the calendar will have a positive effect on student attendance and consistency in student learning outcomes each semester and each year.

RESOLUTION FOR ACT 1240 WAIVER REQUEST
A.C.A. § 6-10-106(a)(1) REGARDING EARLY CALENDAR START DATE

- WHEREAS the Valley View School District is committed to excellence in education for all; and
- WHEREAS the Valley View School District seeks to maximize each school day and instructional hour included in the school calendar; and
- WHEREAS the Valley View School District seeks to adopt a school calendar with student attendance and student learning outcomes in mind; and
- WHEREAS A.C.A. 6-10-106(a)(1) establishes the first allowable day of student attendance as the Monday of the week that contains August 19; and
- WHEREAS the Valley View School District sees the importance in having a consistent first day of school from school year to school year; and
- WHEREAS the first allowable day of school for the 2023-2024 school year was Monday, August 14, 2023; and
- WHEREAS the first allowable day of school for the 2024-2025 school year is Monday, August 19, 2024; and
- WHEREAS the law as presently constructed results in a full-week swing in the allowable start date of school; and
- WHEREAS the Valley View School District seeks to adopt a calendar in which the fall and spring semesters have close to the same number of instructional hours to align curriculum and pacing for semester courses; and
- WHEREAS an earlier first day of school allows for a balanced number of days in the fall and spring semesters resulting in increased equity in instructional outcomes for students regardless of which semester a student is enrolled in semester courses; and
- WHEREAS stakeholders of the District continue to express the importance of considering all options to end the school year prior to Memorial Day; and
- WHEREAS the District has observed an increase in student absences and significantly decreased learning outcomes in previous school years our district calendar has continued past Memorial Day; and
- WHEREAS an earlier first day of school results in more instructional hours prior to spring testing and the students being better equipped to show their ability on the ATLAS assessments that have fixed testing windows; and
- WHEREAS the Arkansas Activities Association calendar is largely unchanged from years past meaning that fall sports and activities will begin this year on the same relative date as they have in the past; and
- WHEREAS golf season will begin on August 5, tennis season on August 12, and volleyball and football benefit games during the week of August 19; and

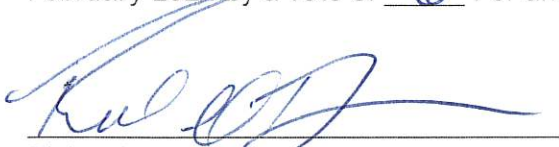
WHEREAS a large number of District students will be on campus to practice and prepare for these activities beginning on or before the first allowable day of school; and

WHEREAS there will be no loss of services for students since an earlier start date simply allows the school year to begin earlier to benefit students in each of the ways identified above; and

WHEREAS the District is dedicated to monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the waiver to ensure a positive effect results from the earlier start date in terms of student attendance, curriculum alignment in semester courses and consistency in student learning outcomes each semester and each year;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Valley View Board of Directors approves the request to apply for an Act 1240 waiver for A.C.A § 6-10-106(a)(1) to allow for an earlier school start date.

Adopted by the Valley View Board of Directors at a regularly scheduled meeting on the 6th day of February 2024 by a vote of 6 For and 0 Against.


Richard Rogers
Board President


Dr. Kristy Rowe
Board Secretary

Select all ways that you are associated with Valley View School District.	If you or your children are currently a Valley View student, select the building(s) you/they attend.	The Valley View School District is requesting a waiver from A.C.A. 6-10-106(a)(1), which establishes the first allowable day of student attendance as the Monday of the week that contains August 19; thus, establishing that the first day of school can be no earlier than August 14. Do you support Valley View School District requesting a waiver for an early start date?	Enter any additional comments you have regarding this waiver request in the space below.
Parent, Staff Member, Community Member	Elementary, Intermediate 3/4, Intermediate 5/6, Jr. High	Yes, I support Valley View School District requesting a waiver for an early start date from A.C.A. 6-10-106(a)(1).	
Parent, Staff Member	Elementary, Jr. High	Yes, I support Valley View School District requesting a waiver for an early start date from A.C.A. 6-10-106(a)(1).	
Parent, Community Member	Elementary, Intermediate 5/6	Yes, I support Valley View School District requesting a waiver for an early start date from A.C.A. 6-10-106(a)(1).	
Parent, Staff Member	Elementary, Intermediate 5/6	Yes, I support Valley View School District requesting a waiver for an early start date from A.C.A. 6-10-106(a)(1).	
Parent, Staff Member	Intermediate 3/4, High School	Yes, I support Valley View School District requesting a waiver for an early start date from A.C.A. 6-10-106(a)(1).	I like the idea of have more equal semesters. I also like the idea of more days for students to attend school before their state mandated testing in the spring.
Parent, Staff Member	High School	Yes, I support Valley View School District requesting a waiver for an early start date from A.C.A. 6-10-106(a)(1).	
Parent, Community Member	PreK, Elementary	Yes, I support Valley View School District requesting a waiver for an early start date from A.C.A. 6-10-106(a)(1).	
Parent, Community Member	High School	Yes, I support Valley View School District requesting a waiver for an early start date from A.C.A. 6-10-106(a)(1).	
Parent	Elementary, Intermediate 5/6	Yes, I support Valley View School District requesting a waiver for an early start date from A.C.A. 6-10-106(a)(1).	
Parent	Intermediate 3/4, Intermediate 5/6	Yes, I support Valley View School District requesting a waiver for an early start date from A.C.A. 6-10-106(a)(1).	
Parent	Elementary, Intermediate 5/6	Yes, I support Valley View School District requesting a waiver for an early start date from A.C.A. 6-10-106(a)(1).	
Student	High School	Yes, I support Valley View School District requesting a waiver for an early start date from A.C.A. 6-10-106(a)(1).	
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Student	High School	Yes, I support Valley View School District requesting a waiver for an early start date from A.C.A. 6-10-106(a)(1).	
Parent	Intermediate 5/6	Yes, I support Valley View School District requesting a waiver for an early start date from A.C.A. 6-10-106(a)(1).	
Parent	Elementary, Intermediate 5/6	Yes, I support Valley View School District requesting a waiver for an early start date from A.C.A. 6-10-106(a)(1).	
Parent, Staff Member, Community Member	Elementary, Intermediate 3/4, Jr. High, High School	Yes, I support Valley View School District requesting a waiver for an early start date from A.C.A. 6-10-106(a)(1).	
Parent	Intermediate 5/6	Yes, I support Valley View School District requesting a waiver for an early start date from A.C.A. 6-10-106(a)(1).	
Parent	Elementary, Intermediate 5/6	Yes, I support Valley View School District requesting a waiver for an early start date from A.C.A. 6-10-106(a)(1).	Our district always puts the best interest of our kids first.
Parent, Community Member	Elementary	Yes, I support Valley View School District requesting a waiver for an early start date from A.C.A. 6-10-106(a)(1).	
Parent	Elementary, Intermediate 3/4	Yes, I support Valley View School District requesting a waiver for an early start date from A.C.A. 6-10-106(a)(1).	
Parent	Jr. High, High School	Yes, I support Valley View School District requesting a waiver for an early start date from A.C.A. 6-10-106(a)(1).	No
Parent	Jr. High, High School	Yes, I support Valley View School District requesting a waiver for an early start date from A.C.A. 6-10-106(a)(1).	
Student	Jr. High, High School	Yes, I support Valley View School District requesting a waiver for an early start date from A.C.A. 6-10-106(a)(1).	
Parent, Staff Member	High School	Yes, I support Valley View School District requesting a waiver for an early start date from A.C.A. 6-10-106(a)(1).	
Parent	Elementary	Yes, I support Valley View School District requesting a waiver for an early start date from A.C.A. 6-10-106(a)(1).	
Parent	Intermediate 5/6	Yes, I support Valley View School District requesting a waiver for an early start date from A.C.A. 6-10-106(a)(1).	

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Parent	Elementary, Intermediate 5/6	Yes, I support Valley View School District requesting a waiver for an early start date from A.C.A. 6-10-106(a)(1).	
Parent	Elementary, Intermediate 3/4, Jr. High	Yes, I support Valley View School District requesting a waiver for an early start date from A.C.A. 6-10-106(a)(1).	
Parent, Staff Member	Elementary, Intermediate 3/4, Jr. High, High School	Yes, I support Valley View School District requesting a waiver for an early start date from A.C.A. 6-10-106(a)(1).	