



Act 1240 Waiver Request

District:	Hazen School School District
LEA Number:	5903000
Superintendent:	Mr. Andy Barrett
Email:	abarrett@hazen.k12.ar.us
Contact for Waiver:	Mr. Andy Barrett
Contact Email:	abarrett@hazen.k12.ar.us
Contact Phone:	870-255-4549
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:	2024-2025 School Early Start Date
Standards/Statutes/Rules:	Arkansas Annotated Code 6-10-106; Uniform dates for beginning and end of school year
Duration Requested:	5 Years
Name of Open-Enrollment Charter Holding the Waiver	Arkansas Virtual Academy and Arkansas Connections Academy
Schools, Grades or Classes the Wavier Will Apply To	All grades: Hazen School District
PURPOSE OF THE WAIVER (Must check at least one)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Enhance Student Learning Opportunities <input checked="" 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 Wilbur D. Mills 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 84 days while the spring semester will be 94 days, a difference of 10 days. With the waiver the fall semester will be 91 days and the spring semester 87 days, a difference of only 4 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.

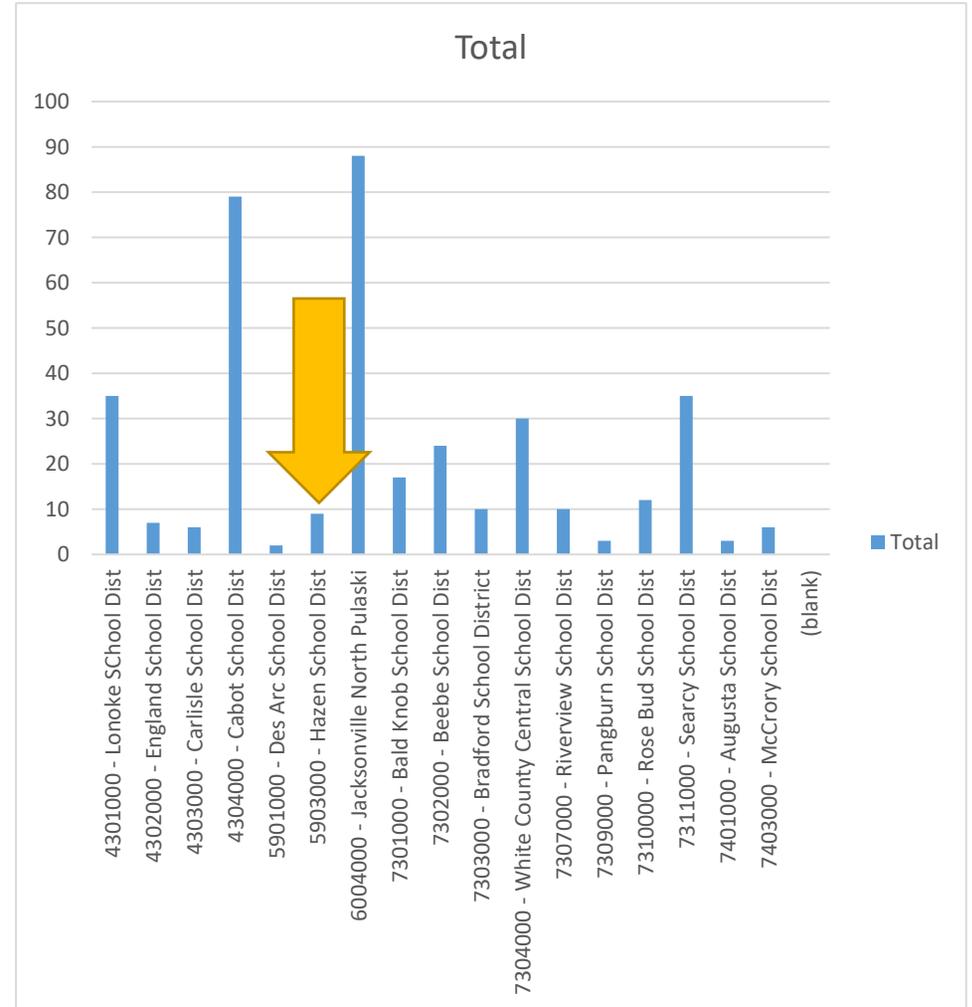
The school districts will create a calendar with an earlier start date which will provide them with more flexibility throughout the school year. The school year will remain the same length. It simply allows a district to continue with a school calendar structured as closely as possible to the current 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.

Number of Students From WDMESC Districts Enrolled in Arkansas Virtual Academy

Row Labels	Count of Grade
4301000 - Lonoke School Dist	35
4302000 - England School Dist	7
4303000 - Carlisle School Dist	6
4304000 - Cabot School Dist	79
5901000 - Des Arc School Dist	2
5903000 - Hazen School Dist	9
6004000 - Jacksonville North Pulaski	88
7301000 - Bald Knob School Dist	17
7302000 - Beebe School Dist	24
7303000 - Bradford School District	10
7304000 - White County Central School Dist	30
7307000 - Riverview School Dist	10
7309000 - Pangburn School Dist	3
7310000 - Rose Bud School Dist	12
7311000 - Searcy School Dist	35
7401000 - Augusta School Dist	3
7403000 - McCrory School Dist	6
(blank)	
Grand Total	376



Number of Students From WDMESC Districts Enrolled in Arkansas Connections Academy

Wilbur D. Mills Education Service Cooperative	
School District	AR Connections Academy Enrollment By District
<i>Augusta</i>	3
<i>Bald Knob</i>	9
<i>Beebe</i>	24
<i>Bradford</i>	0
<i>Cabot</i>	90
<i>Carlisle</i>	8
<i>Des Arc</i>	1
<i>England</i>	18
<i>Hazen</i>	11
<i>Jacksonville North Pulaski</i>	14
<i>Lonoke</i>	12
<i>McCrary</i>	17
<i>Pangburn</i>	8
<i>Riverview</i>	15
<i>RoseBud</i>	8
<i>Searcy</i>	29
<i>White County Central</i>	7

Hazen School Board
Regular Meeting
Monday, February 12, 2024
Regular meeting #8

A regular meeting of the Board of Education was held on Monday, February 12, 2024, in the High School library. After a quorum was established, the meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm, by School Board President, Mason Sickel. Meeting was opened with prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance led by Sandra Penn.

PRESENT

Board members present were Freddie Rogers, Mason Sickel, Chad Greenwalt, Rusty Rogers, Dave Hare, Sandra Penn and Bradley Taylor.

MINUTES APPROVED

Minutes of the January regular Board meeting were not approved due to conflict of votes on Action B, noted by Rusty Rogers. After discussion, Action B will be amended and re-voted on at next meeting. Dave Hare made the motion and second by Sandra Penn. Motion passed 6-0. Minutes from January 22, 2024 will be amended and approved at the next meeting. Minutes of the Special Board meeting on February 5, 2024 were approved. Motion made by Freddie Rogers and second by Dave Hare. Motion carried 6-0.

WARRANTS

District Financial Reports for January 2024 were approved. Motion by Bradley Taylor and second by Freddie Rogers. Motion carried 6-0.

Student Achievement/Recognition

Susan Booth, Morgan Henderson and Stacey Bowman told the Board of the High School Leadership team.

ACTION ITEMS

- A. Recommendation to approve the Superintendent's recommendation to apply for a waiver from the State Board of Education for an early start date of August 14, 2024 for the 2024-2025 school year. Motion made by Bradley Taylor and second by Rusty Rogers. Motion carried 6-0.
- B. Approve the Superintendent's recommendation to submit the corrective action plan to the Legislative Joint Auditing Committee as written. Each Board member had received a 2022-2023 audit report for ADE and had reviewed it. Motion made by Bradley Taylor and second by Rusty Rogers. Motion carried 6-0.
- C. Approve the Superintendent's recommendation to submit a waiver to the State Board of Education to transition the 2023-2024 school calendar from a traditional 178 day calendar to an alternate calendar reflecting 1,068 hours of in-person student instruction using the current school calendar. Motion made by Bradley Taylor and second by Freddie Rogers. Motion carried 6-0.

INFORMATION ITEMS

- A. CPPC – No items
- B. PPC – Working on the 2024-2025 calendar and will re-work the early leave policy
- C. Principals – Both principals updated the Board and actives that have been going on and gave dates of actives for the coming months.
- D. Superintendent – information was given through out the meeting and will continue to work with principals and PPC on 2024-2025 calendar

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 6:36 pm, the Board went into executive session. Board returned at 7:24 pm, with no action taken.

PERSONNEL

A. Elementary Principal, Laura Saranie was rehired for the 2024-2025 school year. Motion made by Mason Sickel and second by Bradley Taylor. Motion carried 6-0.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business the meeting was adjourned at 7:40 pm. Motion made by Mason Sickel and second by Dave Hare. The next regular meeting will be March 11, 2024 at 6:00 pm in the High School library.

2/13/24

Faculty and Staff,

PPC and Mr Barrett have been working on figuring out a way to make up snow days that we were out in January. At the School Board meeting last night, Mr Barrett proposed for the district to submit a waiver to the state board of education to transition the 2023-2024 school calendar from a traditional 178 day calendar to an alternate calendar reflecting 1068 hours of in-person student instruction using the current school calendar. We need to have a vote of the staff to do this.

Do you wish for the district to submit a waiver to change the current calendar from 178 days to an alternate option?

52 responses

