



## Act 1240 District Waiver Request

<b>District:</b>	<b>Siloam Springs</b>
<b>LEA Number:</b>	0406000
<b>Superintendent:</b>	Jody Wiggins
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:wigginsj@gosiloam.com">wigginsj@gosiloam.com</a>
<b>Contact for Waiver:</b>	Kelly Svebek
<b>Contact Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:svebekk@gosiloam.com">svebekk@gosiloam.com</a>
<b>Contact Phone:</b>	479-524-2251
<b>Date Received by DESE:</b>	3/17/21

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

<b>Topic:</b>	Teacher Licensure
<b>Standards/Statutes/Rules:</b>	Standard 4-D.1 – Teacher Licensure A.C.A. §6-15-1004 – Qualified teacher in every classroom A.C.A. §6-17-301 – Employment of licensed personnel A.C.A. §6-17-309 – Teacher licensure waivers A.C.A. §6-17-401 – Licensure requirements A.C.A. §6-17-902 – Definition of teacher A.C.A. §6-17-908 – Teacher Salary Fund A.C.A. §6-17-919 – Warrants void without license and contract DESE Rules Governing Educator Licensure Chapter - Section 7
<b>Duration Requested:</b>	5 years – through the 2025-26 school year
<b>Name of Open-Enrollment Charter Holding the Waiver</b>	Hass Hall Academy
<b>Schools, Grades or Classes the Wavier Will Apply To</b>	K-8 Art and Music Art – 200510, 211510, 222510, 233510,2 44510, 355510, 366510, 377510, 388510 Music – 200520, 211520, 222520, 233520, 244520, 355560, 366560, 377560, 388560

- 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.**

Siloam Springs School District (SSSD) has established a 100% virtual academy for families who choose to educate their children off site. SSSD will continue to provide onsite instruction for students who choose a face-to-face option and will adhere to all state statutes and DESE rules. At the elementary level, the digital provider supplies art curriculum. We would like our K-8 virtual classroom teachers to deliver the art curriculum as our onsite art instructors already carry a full teaching load onsite. Our digital provider does not currently provide music curriculum. We would like for our music educators for grades K-8 to develop a homegrown digital course that can be delivered by our K-8 virtual classroom teachers. This would allow our virtual students to receive similar instruction to onsite students while allowing elementary music teachers to teach fully onsite, reducing the music teachers' class load.

SSSD will continue to serve our patrons in onsite environments in adherence with state statutes and Arkansas Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) rules. However, some of the statutes and rules are not applicable or feasible for implementation in a virtual setting. In order to enhance learning opportunities for students whose parents prefer to educate them at home (not only now during a pandemic, but also in the future), a virtual education opportunity is necessary. Many families in our district who choose to homeschool their students are able to access various curricular options and support from other families and/or homeschool coalitions. Other families who prefer to homeschool are not so fortunate. They do not have the means or ability to be the sole provider of their child's education. To ensure equitable access to effective, high-quality curricula and instruction for these families, the district has developed a virtual option. The waivers requested herein will allow the school district to provide high-quality instruction for students while families will have flexibility regarding the time, place, and pace that instruction occurs.

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

SSSD will continue to provide on-site instruction for students who choose a face-to-face option and will adhere to all state statutes and DESE rules. District leadership will make every effort to hire appropriately-licensed teachers for every grade level. In order to minimize the number of teachers who must teach both onsite and virtual students, we are requesting a waiver of licensure for art and music in grades K-8. The art curriculum is provided by an approved provider and delivered by a licensed elementary teacher. The music curriculum will be developed by Siloam Springs music teachers and delivered by a licensed elementary teacher. K-8 virtual students will still receive instruction in art and music annually.

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

Ultimately, the effectiveness of the waiver will be measured by student performance on state-mandated assessments. Since art and music are not tested areas, additional data sets for monitoring and evaluating waiver effectiveness include levels of student engagement; performance on formative, summative, and interim assessments; and perceptual data collected through annually-administered parent and student surveys. Teachers and the virtual academy director are responsible for maintaining data sets and facilitating data analyses to determine effectiveness.



# Siloam Springs School District

87 South Dogwood  
Post Office Box 798  
Siloam Springs, Arkansas 72761

Telephone 479.524.3191  
Fax 479.524.8002  
www.gosiloam.com

## District Act 1240 Waiver Requests- Digital Learning

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education offers an Act 1240 application process specific to digital learning. The following waivers are those that are included in the digital learning plan application. With Siloam Springs School Board approval, the request for waivers will be submitted to the State Board of Education and will take effect August 2021 pending state approval.

<b>Rule(s)</b>	6-18-213(a)(2)
<b>Topic</b>	Attendance: (a)(1) A record of pupil attendance shall be kept by each school district of the state in a format prescribed by the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education. (2) This basic record, showing the daily attendance and absence of each student for the school year, shall be kept by a teacher or other officially designated person who notes the attendance or absence of each student on a daily basis.
<b>Explanation of District Use of Waiver</b>	<p>The nature of digital learning gives students and their families some degree of control over time, pace, path, and place for learning. Student attendance in the Siloam Springs Virtual Academy (SSVA) is based on daily login to a district-issued device between the hours of 6:00 AM and 10:00 PM. Special attendance consideration is given to students working at an accelerated pace. Teachers will continue to record attendance in eSchool.</p> <p>SSSD has developed an internal device management system (CMD) that identifies student access to district-issued devices. Teachers will monitor student time and pace with a combination of the Florida Virtual School/Buzz and internal management system.</p> <p>District policies and practices regarding student absences apply to virtual academy students. Chronic absenteeism may result in a recommendation to return to onsite instruction or a referral to the juvenile court for additional services.</p>

Rule(s)	6-17-812(a)(2)
Topic	Class Size <b>(2)</b> ..a teacher shall not exceed the maximum class size permitted under the Standards for Accreditation of Arkansas Public Schools and School Districts.
Explanation of District Use of Waiver	<p>The DESE Rules Governing Distance and Digital Learning, Sec. 6.07, state that distance learning courses, as defined in rule are considered "large group instruction" courses for the purposes of the Standards for Accreditation. Classes with 100% virtual enrollment may exceed class size maximums due to the fact that technology-based approaches are the primary instructional delivery and teachers are providing instruction through technology-based approaches utilizing a LMS with digital content and allowing for some degree of self-paced or flexible access. Teachers of record who are dedicated to teaching virtually or have a virtual class will adhere to DESE's rules regarding large group instruction.</p> <p>Current class size restrictions are in place for many reasons including classroom management, physical space limitations, and the ability to give individualized attention. The nature of digital learning and virtual instruction remove some of those issues. Because virtual learning is primarily asynchronous, teachers can instruct more than the usual class size load of students. There isn't a limit to how many students can access the curriculum at one time; however, we believe that virtual teachers should have no more than double the class size mandated by law.</p> <p>Requested student-teacher class size ratios are as follows:  K: 40:1  1-3: 50:1  4-6: 56:1  7-8: 60:1, not to exceed 180 students total</p> <p>Teachers in grades 7-8 who teach both virtual and onsite classes can have 10 additional students per digital period, not to exceed 180 students total.</p>

<b>Rule(s)</b>	6-17-812
<b>Topic</b>	Teaching Load: Teacher of Record provides virtual instruction to only students who are remote. Please note that 100% virtual (online) or remote (distance) classes are considered large group instruction courses as per DESE Rules for Distance and Digital Learning and teaching load would not apply as per DESE Rules Governing Class Size and Teaching Load.
<b>Explanation of District Use of Waiver</b>	<p>The Siloam Springs Virtual Academy (SSVA) offers a virtual option utilizing an LMS with digital content. This provides for some degree of self-paced or flexible access, allowing for increased class size and teaching load maximums.</p> <p>Teaching loads by grade levels for SSVA are as follows:  K: 40:1  1-3: 50:1  4-6: 56:1  7-8: 60:1, not to exceed 180 students total</p> <p>Teachers in grades 7- 8 who teach both virtual and onsite classes can have 10 additional students per digital period, not to exceed 180 students total. Although this would be considered the maximum number of students for a teaching load, current projections indicate numbers much lower than the maximum.</p>

<b>Rule(s)</b>	6-16-102
<b>Topic</b>	6-hour instructional day (Waiver applies to virtual/remote students only)- "school day" shall mean a day in which classes are in session and students receive at least six (6) hours of instructional time.
<b>Explanation of District Use of Waiver</b>	<p>Virtual students may have more control over the pace of their coursework than those engaged in onsite instruction. Virtual students may work at an accelerated pace and may complete multiple days of work for a class in a shorter amount of time. Therefore, students may not engage in six hours of instruction daily. Some may work ahead, take longer, etc. on some days and work less on other days.</p>



<b>Rule(s)</b>	6-16-126
<b>Topic</b>	Clock hours- 60 hours of seat time is required for 0.5 credit
<b>Explanation of District Use of Waiver</b>	Because virtual students have more control over the pace of their instruction and learning, mastery of grade level standards and completion of coursework may not require 120 clock hours. Some students will require more time to complete a course and it is possible that some students will be able to finish a course in less time. Instruction is designed so that students master the standards; how long that takes each student may vary.

<b>Rule(s)</b>	6-6-102(a)(5)
<b>Topic</b>	Recess - Applies to virtual students only
<b>Explanation of District Use of Waiver</b>	K-6 virtual teachers will encourage students to engage in supervised, unstructured social time, free play and vigorous activity scheduled as part of the day; however, given the nature of virtual school, it is not possible for teachers to ensure that this takes place.

<b>Rule(s)</b>	6-17-309 6-17-919 6-17-401 6-15-1004 6-17-902
<b>Topic</b>	Teacher Licensure
<b>Explanation of District Use of Waiver</b>	Siloam Springs School District (SSSD) has established a virtual academy for families who choose to educate their children off site. SSSD will continue to provide on-site instruction for students who choose a face-to-face option and will adhere to all state statutes and DESE rules. District leadership will make every effort to hire appropriately-licensed teachers for every grade level. However, due to the fluid nature of virtual school enrollment, the number of students enrolled at each grade level may vary. Therefore, a teacher may need to teach outside of his/her grade-level area or subject area in order to meet the demand. At the elementary level, the digital provider supplies an aligned art curriculum. We would like our 1-6 virtual classroom teachers to deliver that curriculum when possible as our on-site art instructors already carry a full teaching load onsite. Our digital provider does not currently provide a music curriculum. We would like for our music educators for grades 1-6 to develop a homegrown digital course that can be delivered by our 1-6 virtual classroom teachers. This would allow our virtual students to receive similar instruction to onsite students while allowing elementary music teachers to teach fully onsite, reducing the music teachers' class load.

**School Board Approval**

School Board President:



School Board Secretary:



Superintendent:



Date:

3/11/2021





# *Siloam Springs School District*

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Fax 479.524.8002  
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March 15, 2021

Dear Ms. Webb:

In order to provide art and music curriculum to our students who are choosing a 100% virtual option, the Siloam Springs School District is applying for a waiver under Act 1240.

In their meeting on March 11, the Siloam Springs School District Board of Directors approved submission of this [waiver request](#). Over the course of this school year, we held [virtual meetings](#) with community members, district staff, and parents to address questions, concerns, and to share information. Links to the waiver(s) and other resources created as a result of parent input and questions can be found at: [bit.ly/SSVA\\_DLP](http://bit.ly/SSVA_DLP).

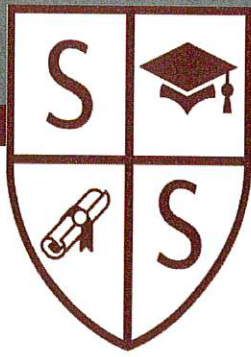
Please see the attached waiver application and supporting documentation. If you need additional information or clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Jody Wiggins

Superintendent

Siloam Springs School District



## Digital Learning Plan Stakeholder Feedback

### Digital Learning Plan Collaboration:

- Principals/Directors Meeting - 2/2/21
- Curriculum Planning w/ Pearson - 2/2/21
- District Leadership Team meeting - 2/8/21
- APSRC Demo - Digital Learning/RFL Plan - 2/8/21
- AACIA Collaborative Session - 2/9/21
- NWAESC Digital Learning Plan Meeting - 2/10/21
- AACIA Small Districts Learning Plan Meeting 2/10/21
- Curriculum Planning w/ FLVS - 2/11/21
- Principals/Directors Meeting - 2/16/21
- Principal/Directors Meeting - Conversion Charter 2/17/21
- District Leadership Team meeting - 2/22/21
- SSSD HS planning - 2/23/21
- AACIA Small Districts Learning Plan Meeting 2/24/21
- AAEA Digital Learning Fair - 2/25/21
- NWAESC Digital Learning Plan Meeting 2/25/21
- District Leadership Team meeting - 2/25/21
- Principal/Directors Meeting - 3/02/21
- District Leadership Team meeting - 3/2/21
- AACIA Meeting - 3/09/21
- SSSD Community Stakeholder Committee - Google Meet - 3/09/21
- NWAESC Digital Learning Plan Meeting - 3/10/21
- SSSD Community Stakeholder Committee - Google Meet - 3/10/21

### SSSD Board Meeting Presentation

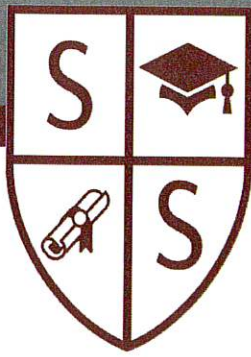
- March 11, 2021

### Stakeholder Surveys:

- Students - Nov. 2020; April 2021
- Parents - Nov. 2020; April 2021

Feedback from Fall 2020 Surveys:

**What is going well in the Virtual Academy:**



- MS/HS Parent: I feel most of the teachers are accessible and responsive. I feel those leading the program listen well and continue to work to implement effective changes in the program.
- HS Parent: The ability to work at different times and not being required to complete by 3:30 each day.
- Elem. Parent: For Third grade the teacher has done a fantastic job of sending the list of lessons required for the week at the beginning of each week so we can help our third grader plan what she will do each day. She also really enjoys the once a week zoom call with a small group from her class and the videos on Pearson.
- Elem. Parent: I can tell my son is learning, and we've enjoyed the overall experience for the most part.
- HS Student: That I don't have to sit in a classroom all day and can do it at my own pace
- HS Student: No one to talk to for me to get distracted. If I need a break I can just shut the computer down for a few minutes.

### **What would make the Virtual Experience better?**

- MS/HS Parent: Que los maestros estuboeran conectados con ellos como si estuviesen en clase regular. (*That the teachers were connected with them like they were in traditional classes*)
- Elem Parent: Our third grader would enjoy a chance to interact with other students online a little more frequently as she misses the in-person interactions. Maybe twice a week instead of once a week.
- Elem. Student: More time with teachers.