

Four Year Update to State Board of Education on Act 1240 Waivers
Southeast Arkansas Education Service Cooperative School Districts
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The Southeast Co-op area continues to have a severe teacher shortage. This teacher shortage is why we have continued to request waivers from teacher licensure from the State Board of Education. Our original waivers were for one year, 2016-2017. On July 9, 2017, The State Board of Education issued Act 1240 waivers for five years to Cleveland County, Crossett, Dermott, Dewitt, Drew Central, Dumas, Hamburg, Hermitage, Lakeside, Monticello, Star City, and Warren School District in the Southeast Co-op. The five-year waivers were from teacher and library media specialist licensure and will end June 30, 2022. On April 13, 2017, McGehee School District was eligible for waivers and received Act 1240 five-year waivers from teacher and library media specialist licensure and will end June 30, 2022. On July 13, 2017, Woodlawn School District was eligible for waivers and received five-year Act 1240 waivers from teacher and library media specialist licensure and will end June 30, 2022. On June 14, 2018, Fordyce School District (now in the Southeast Co-op) was eligible for waivers and received five-year Act 1240 Waivers from teacher and library media specialist licensure and will end June 30, 2023. All 15 of our Co-op schools have Act 1240 waivers for teacher and library media specialist licensure.

Dr. Jay Barth, a State Board of Education member at the time the Act 1240 waivers were granted, asked that I give a two-year and a four-year update to the Board regarding how many Act 1240 unlicensed college graduates hired as teachers went on to acquire a teaching license. Updates also include data on Act 1240 teachers that continued to teach in a Co-op district and how Act 1240 teachers compared to teachers that were education majors in college. This four-year report covers these requested issues from Dr. Barth. In addition, the Board requested that we provide the Act 1240 teachers ethics training. This was accomplished by making ProEthica training and course completion a requirement of year one of the Novice Teacher Mentoring Program at the Southeast Co-op.

Number of ACT 1240 Teachers Hired	School Year
54	2016-2017
68	2017-2018
55	2018-2019
60	2019-2020

When an Act 1240 Teacher is hired in one of our districts, they are put on a teacher contract with the school district that states what adequate yearly progress they must make toward becoming a fully licensed teacher in the state of Arkansas to be renewed for the following year. The Act 1240 teachers' progress and documentation are reviewed yearly by the district to assure that adequate yearly progress is being made before another contract is issued to the ACT 1240 teacher.

- Of the 237 Act 1240 teachers hired thru 2020, **131 or 55 % of the Act 1240 teachers have become licensed teachers in Arkansas.** Of the 237 Act 1240 teachers hired thru 2020, **168 or 71% are still teaching in a Co-op school district.**

- Of the 237 Act 1240 teachers hired, **61 of the 237 or 26% were ranked above average compared to an education major teacher.**
- Of the 237 Act 1240 teachers hired, **155 or 65% were ranked average as compared to an education major teacher.**
- Of the 237 Act 1240 teachers hired, **21 or 9% were ranked below average compared to an education major teacher.**

The most significant roadblocks to Act 1240 teachers becoming a licensed teacher

- The Act 1240 teachers cannot pass all parts of the PRAXIS Exams to acquire an Arkansas Teaching Licensure.
- The Act 1240 teachers do not have a background in classroom management, classroom procedures, and learning strategies.
- Act 1240 teachers are overwhelmed in their first year of teaching with mandatory training required by state-mandated professional development, the requirements of an alternative licensure program such as the MAT Program or APPEL, and learning how to teach all at the same time.

The greatest help to Act 1240 teachers becoming a licensed teacher

- A grant for the Novice Teacher Mentor Program from the Arkansas Department of Education to the Co-op provides support and professional development for three years in classroom management and procedures, Praxis support, ethics training, and lesson planning using content standards.
- The grant also provides RISE support, help to find licensure programs, teaching strategies, student engagement, TESS, special education/504, and one on one support.
- The local school district that hires the Act 1240 teacher also provides a buddy teacher to learn the district's policies and procedures.
- The Co-op links each teacher with a content specialist at the Co-op. This specialist answers questions and provides help/support directly related to the content area of the Act 1240 teacher.

I want to express my sincere thanks to the State Board of Education for these waivers. Below are the results of the trust the State Board of Education placed in our process to hire college graduates, mentor them, and hold these college graduates accountable for getting into a licensure program to gain licensure.

- There are 131 licensed teachers in our schools that we did not have before the waivers.
- There are three teachers per AELS (Arkansas Educator Licensure System) whose licenses are in progress to be issued at the time of this report.
- Three teachers are working as para pros in the district that initially hired them while studying to pass the Praxis Exam, blocking them from licensure.