



Act 1240 Waiver Request

District:	Hoxie School District
LEA Number:	3804000
Superintendent:	Kelly Gillham
Email:	kelly.gillham@hoxieschools.com
Contact for Waiver:	Kelly Gillham
Contact Email:	kelly.gillham@hoxieschools.com
Contact Phone:	870-886-2401 ext. 181
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 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 member school districts of the Northeast 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:

This waiver allows our district to give semester tests and end the first semester before Christmas break. It allows more instructional days at the beginning of the school year when both teachers and students are rested and ready to learn.

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 and volleyball will begin next fall on the same relative date as they did this fall, with or without the waiver, therefore many 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 volleyball, band, cheer, dance, Student Council, 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.

Hoxie School District
602 SW Hartigan
Hoxie, AR 72433
February 12, 2024

Resolution Name: Early Start Waiver

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

WHEREAS the Hoxie School District 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, The Hoxie School District is applying for an early start waiver, allowing the district to start school August 13, 2024, as opposed to the required August 19, 2024, start date. This is to alleviate the problems listed: 1. Starting early will allow an even distribution of the four quarters of the school year. It will also allow semester 1 to end before Christmas break 2. It will allow local decision on holiday time off, that the school and community value. 3. It will keep the school year from ending after Memorial Day and going into June (this is when employees and families take vacations). 4. Beginning school earlier automatically results in more days of instruction prior to spring testing. More days of instruction will result in higher test scores,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of Hoxie School District hereby authorizes the district administration to formally request a waiver for early start to the school year on August 13, 2024, such as early start waiver, pertaining to state law that requires school district to start school on or after August 19, 2024, and the reasons are stated above.

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 12th day of February 2024, by the Board of Directors of Hoxie School District.

Wes Gates

Wes Gates, President
Hoxie School District Board of Directors

ATTEST:

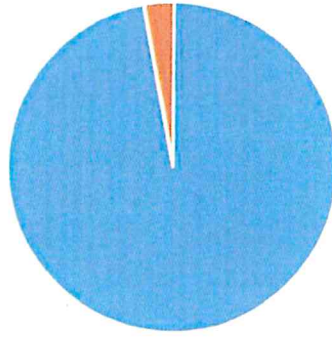
Jeff Worlow

Jeff Worlow, Secretary
Hoxie School District Board of Directors

Note: Please consult with your district's legal counsel and ensure that the resolution complies with local laws and regulations before adopting it.

Faculty Responses

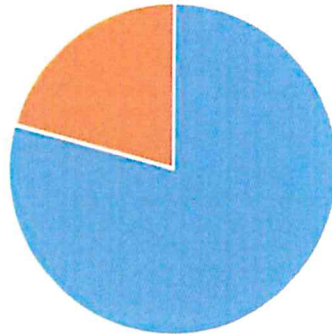
Would you support the district's efforts in seeking a waiver to start school as soon as August 13, 2024, in place of the required August 19, 2024, start date?



■ Yes ■ No

Parent/Guardian Response:

Would you support the district's efforts in seeking a waiver to start school as soon as August 13, 2024, in place of the required August 19, 2024, start date?



■ Yes ■ No