



**DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY
& SECONDARY EDUCATION**

Act 1240 Waiver Request

District:	Gravette School District
LEA Number:	0404
Superintendent:	Maribel Childress
Email:	maribel.childress@gravetteschools.net
Contact for Waiver:	Maribel Childress
Contact Email:	maribel.childress@gravetteschools.net
Contact Phone:	479-787-4100
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 Waiver 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 Northwest Arkansas 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.

• **REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION**
GRAVETTE SCHOOL DISTRICT #20

KIND OF MEETING: Regular Meeting

DATE: January 29, 2024

PLACE: Administration Building

TIME: 6:00 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Tracy Moorman
Superintendent
Robyn Lovell
Superintendent
Matt Croxdale
Manager
Tim Craig
Chris Flynt
attendees
Heather Finley

ALSO PRESENT:

Maribel Childress,
Rebecca Sears, Assistant
Dennis Kurczek, Business
Building Principals
See sign in sheet for additional

NOT IN ATTENDANCE:

Brad Harris

ITEM 1

Roll Call/Quorum Established:

Roll was called and is reflected above.

ITEM 2

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge was led by Maribel Childress

ITEM 3

Patron Comments

None

ITEM 4

Welcome and Celebrations

- School Board Appreciation Month
- New Employees: Laurel Stebbins and Mary Steele

A motion was made by Matt Croxdale and seconded by Heather Finley to amend the consent agenda to add Item E, Item G, and to the Actions Items add Item B, Item E, and table Item H until the March board meeting. Motion passed 6-0. Vote taken at 6:11 pm.

ITEM 5

Consent Agenda

A motion was made by Heather Finley and seconded by Chris Flynt to accept the consent agenda. Motion passed 6-0. Vote taken at 6:11 pm.

ITEM 6

Financial Report

- Monthly Financial Report
 - A motion was made by Chris Flynt and seconded by Matt Croxdale to approve the January Financial Report. Motion passed 6-0. Vote taken at 6:17 pm.
- ARP/ESSER Financial Report
- Technology Expenditure Report
- Mileage Reimbursement Expenditure Report

ITEM 7

Superintendent Report

- Data Report: Lexia Data Fall to Winter Growth Report
- HIRED! Grant Mid-Year Data Report
- Board Member Training Report
- 2nd Quarter District Goals Report: Safety, Achievement, Personalization, Partnerships
- First Semester Discipline Report
- December Safety Report
- ESSER Funded Positions Report
- Student Transfer Report
- Enrollment and Attendance Reports

ITEM 8

Action Items

- A motion was made by Heather Finley and seconded by Matt Croxdale to approve seeking bids for the purchase of double stack ovens and warmers for the Gravette Middle School. Utilizing food service funds. Motion passed 6-0. Vote taken at 6:42 pm.
- A motion was made by Matt Croxdale and seconded by Heather Finley to allow Maribel to take the snow make up day proposal to the staff for a vote. Motion passed 6-0. Vote taken at 6:50 pm
- A motion was made by Heather Finley and seconded by Tim Craig to approve the Drug/Alcohol Expulsion: Opportunity for Early Return guideline document for immediate implementation and inclusion in the GMS and GHS school handbooks. Motion passed 6-0. Vote taken at 6:52 pm.
- A motion was made by Heather Finley and seconded by Chris Flynt to approve the attached SRO MOU for fiscal year 2024. Motion passed 6-0. Vote taken at 6:54 pm.
- A motion was made by Heather Finley and seconded by Matt Croxdale to approve a Resolution for the Gravette School District to seek an Act 1240 Waiver Request in partnership with the other member districts of the Northwest Arkansas Education Service Cooperative. The purpose of the waiver is to enhance student learning opportunities. The specific waiver being requested is to allow the applying school districts to set their individual district's class to be no earlier than Monday, August 12. Motion passed 6-0. Vote taken at 6:57 pm.
- A motion was made by Heather Finley and seconded by Tim Craig to proceed with purchasing 45 Aruba Switches utilizing building funds. Motion passed 6-0. Vote taken at 6:57 pm.
- A motion was made by Heather Finley and seconded by Tim Craig that the Technology Department proceeds with using White River Services to recable GMS utilizing fund

2232 in the amount of \$13,434. Motion passed 6-0. Vote taken at 6:58 pm.

- Tabled until March
- Approval of Policy Amendment Proposals (for clarification/correction)
 - A motion was made by Chris Flynt and seconded by Heather Finley to approve the amendments to Policy 2.4E as written. Motion passed 6-0. Vote taken at 6:59 pm.
 - A motion was made by Chris Flynt and seconded by Heather Finley to approve the amendments to Policy 3.8 as written. Motion passed 6-0. Vote taken at 7:00 pm.
 - A motion was made by Chris Flynt and seconded by Heather Finley to approve the amendments to Policy 8.5 as written. Motion passed 6-0. Vote taken at 7:00 pm.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

6 board members moved to executive session at 7:01 pm and returned to open session at 7:51 pm, for the purpose of discussing Employment pursuant to the Arkansas Freedom Act of Information Act 93, as amended. No other items were discussed and no votes were taken on any item.

- Superintendent Evaluation
 - A motion was made by Heather Finley and seconded by Matt Croxdale to extend the contract of Superintendent Maribel Childress for one additional year through June 30, 2026. Motion passed 6-0. Vote taken at 7:51 pm

ITEM 9

Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by Matt Croxdale and seconded by Tim Craig. Motion passed 6-0. Vote taken at 7:51 pm.

Robyn Lovell, Board Secretary

Date approved by Board



Gravette School District

609 Birmingham Street SE , Gravette, Arkansas 72736
479-787-4100 | www.gravetteschools.net

Maribel Childress
Superintendent of Schools
609 Birmingham Street SE.

Rebecca Sears
Assistant Superintendent
609 Birmingham Street SE

Nikki Brecheen
*Principal, Glenn A. Duffy
Elementary*
601 El Paso Street SE

Dr. Mandy Barrett
*Principal, Gravette Upper
Elementary*
500 8th Ave SE

Taos Jones
*Principal, Gravette Middle
School*
607 Dallas St SE

Bryan Bearden
*Assistant Principal,
Gravette Middle School*
607 Dallas St SE

Shannon Mitchell
*Principal, Gravette High
School*
325 Lion Drive S.

Jared Schoonover
*Assistant Principal,
Gravette High School*
325 Lion Drive S.

Norman Mitchell
Director of Athletics
325 Lion Drive S.

Rebecca Walker
Director of Special Education
601 El Paso Street SE

Richard Carver
*Director of Transportation
& Maintenance*
1133 Main St SE

Sheila Roughton
Director of Food Services
406 6th Avenue SE

Daniel Rice
Director of Technology
406 6th Avenue SE

David Cadle
*Safety & Security
Coordinator*
406 6th Avenue SE

Gravette School District
609 Birmingham Street SE
Gravette, AR 72736

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

WHEREAS, the Gravette 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 Board of Directors of Gravette School District seeks an Act 1240 Waiver for the purpose of enhancing student learning opportunities. The specific waiver being requested is to allow the applying school district to set their individual district's start date to be no earlier than Monday, August 12, 2024;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of Gravette School District hereby authorizes the district administration to formally request a waiver for the purpose of enhancing student learning opportunities. The specific waiver being requested is to allow the applying school district to set their individual district's start date to be no earlier than Monday, August 12, 2024;

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 January 29, 2024 by the Board of Directors of Gravette School District.

Tracy Moorman, President
Gravette Board of Directors

ATTEST:


Robyn Lovell, Secretary
Gravette Board of Directors

2024-2025 School Start Date

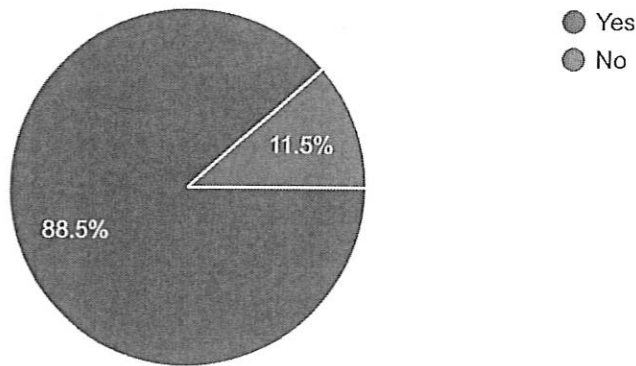
104 responses

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Do you support the Gravette School District's desire to request an Act 1240 Waiver that would allow the district to consider starting school the week of August 12, instead of being limited to a start date during the week of August 19?

 Copy

104 responses



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