



DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY  
& SECONDARY EDUCATION

## Act 1240 District Waiver Request

District:	McGehee
LEA Number:	2105000
Superintendent:	Linda Tullos
Email:	linda.tullos@mcgeheeschools.org
Contact for Waiver:	Linda Tullos or Amanda Bittle
Contact Email:	linda.tullos@mcgeheeschools.org
Contact Phone:	870-222-3670
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

**Waivers Requested:**

- ☒ Standard 1-A.5;
- ☒ DESE Rules Governing Class Size and Teaching Load
- ☒ Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-812

**Internal supports provided to the intern (check all that apply)**

- ☒ Education service cooperative novice mentoring
- ☒ Classroom management/behavior
- ☒ Common planning time
- ☒ Additional Planning Time
- ☒ Frequent check-ins with university internship supervisor
- ☒ Other: \_MES Facilitators' modeling and providing embedded PD

**Waiver Request**

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<b>Topic:</b>	Class Size and Teaching Load
<b>Standards/Statutes/Rules:</b>	Standard 1-A.5; DESE Rules Governing Class Size and Teaching Load; Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-812
<b>Duration Requested:</b>	5 years
<b>Name of Open-Enrollment Charter Holding the Waiver</b>	Arkansas Virtual Academy
<b>Schools, Grades or Classes the Waiver Will Apply To</b>	McGehee Elementary

- 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.**

Maddie Pruitt is serving as a long term substitute in first grade at McGehee Elementary School. She is in her second semester internship at the University of Arkansas at Monticello. During the spring and early summer of 2021, McGehee Elementary School had multiple vacancies in our building for the next school year. All certified applicants were interviewed and hired when appropriate. We worked with the university for candidates that were in the MAT program or were recent graduates. Most of the MAT candidates had just started the program, subsequently had not taken any of the Praxis tests or completed coursework in education. Therefore, we were still short a teacher for the first grade.

In previous years, UAM had an agreement with DESE to use second semester interns for long term substitutes. We have had to do this one time in the past, and it was extremely beneficial for all parties involved. Since we had eliminated our options, we contacted UAM for possibilities of doing this again this year. There was a candidate that was highly recommended from the professors in the education department. She had passed her Praxis tests and had more qualifications than any other long term substitute available. We contacted the candidate and interviewed her. She was interested so we proceeded with this process.

Maddie started working in first grade in August. Since that time, she has been exceptional in the classroom. We are very thankful to have her. She has distributed strong classroom management in working with her students, and she has some challenging ones in the room. Instructional facilitators, interventionists, and administrators have observed her classroom instruction. Her content has been strong and appropriate for the standards. Science of Reading and Cognitive Guide Math strategies are evident in her planning and presentation, whether she is working with small groups or whole groups. Differentiation and use of data is shown by the grouping and content of the small groups she teaches. Students are fully engaged and participating while in the classroom. Overall, we are very pleased with her performance and grateful for the opportunity for her to work at our school.

As a first year teacher and second semester intern, our district plans to provide support in a multitude of ways to ensure her success. Instructional facilitators are providing support in math and literacy, as well as other classroom areas as needed. Intervention specialists also assist with interventions for her struggling students and collaborate with the teacher. She has a mentor teacher that works directly with her every day for support, resources, and assistance. The mentor observes and responds with feedback and coaching. Math and literacy specialists from the educational cooperative provide support for all our teachers and work with new teachers, including Ms. Pruitt as needed and requested. Ms. Pruitt has support from her co-teachers during weekly PLC meetings for improving instruction based upon data.

Additional professional development is provided during the year, such as continuing CGI, Science of Reading, Talents of Unlimited, etc.

Since Ms. Pruitt is still completing her internship with UAM, she is allowed to attend any event that is available or required by the UAM School of Education. The district allows her to miss school and covers her class for the day(s) needed. Her mentor teacher and administrator are trained in the roles, responsibilities, and procedures for working as a mentor to interns. Any concerns or praises are shared with the intern supervisor. Additionally, the intern supervisor will observe her in the classroom on our campus. There is open communication between all parties.

We are requesting the waiver to continue using her in conjunction with a lead teacher for this semester. Her students are receiving a high quality education by an intern that will become Arkansas Highly Qualified with exceptional evaluations. Maddie will definitely be a model teacher in her career as an educator. Our staff and parents are very thankful for her work within our district.

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

The district is not waiving any student service. The lead teacher will be the teacher of record for multiple courses. Some of the courses will be taught by a student that is enrolled in a teaching program at an institution of higher education. The lead teacher will be assisting the teacher in training. The waiver is necessary since the lead teacher will be the teacher of record for multiple courses, even if the lead teacher is not teaching that class every day.

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

The McGehee School District will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the waiver in the following ways.

- The completion of the Intern's second semester of internship at UAM.
- The growth of student academic progress as measured by the iReady Diagnostic Assessments.
- Monitor the grade level meetings to ensure that the Intern's students are receiving the same quality education as other students in the same grade.
- The Intern will become a licensed teacher upon graduation in December.
- Instructional Facilitators will frequently observe the intern and teach model lessons.
- Instructional Facilitators and Building Administrators will complete classroom walkthroughs and observations and provide explicit feedback to the Intern with glows and grows as well as next steps for improvement.
- The Intern will attend professional development as recommended by Instructional Facilitators, Building Administrators, and District Administrators.
- Upon the recommendation of the building principal, the intern will be hired as teacher of record for the class starting in January.
- Central Office Staff will review all data related to the intern which will include but is not limited to iReady Diagnostic Assessments, Intern Praxis Scores, Classroom Walkthrough and Observation Feedback from the Instructional Facilitators and Building Administrators, data from UAM Intern Supervisor and Southeast Arkansas Education Service Cooperative Specialists, and records of professional development.

# ACT 1240 Waiver Questionnaire Form

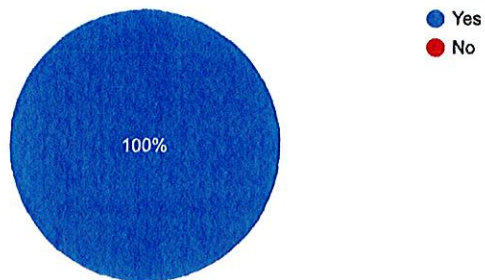
15 responses

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Do you think that there is a shortage of licensed teachers in our area?

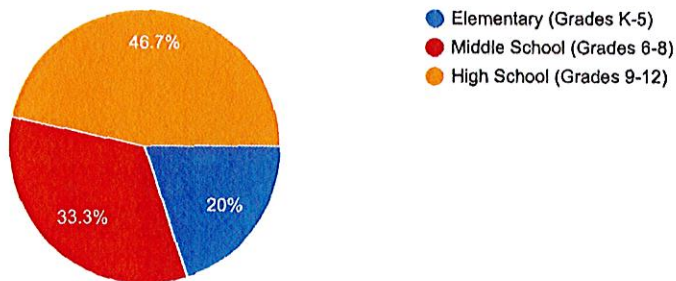


15 responses



If you think there is a shortage of licensed teachers, what level do you think is affected the most?

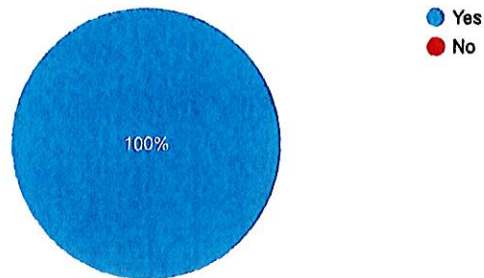
15 responses





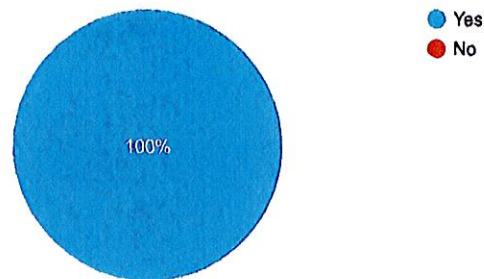
If the McGehee School District is unable to find a licensed teacher, do you think the District should hire someone with a bachelors degree who is working toward getting licensed?

15 responses



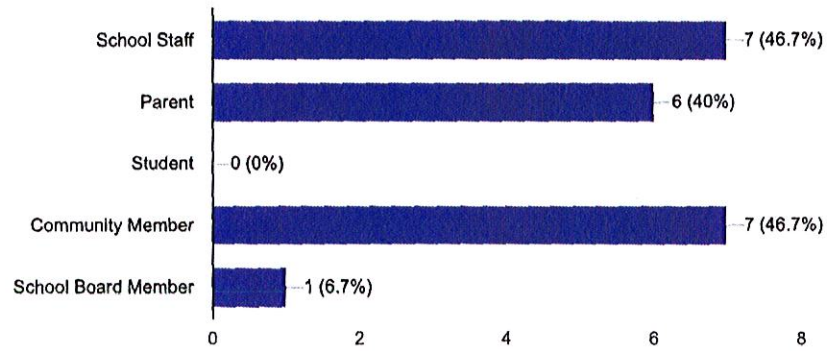
Our current 5 year ACT Waiver for Teachers licensure is expiring. Do you think the McGehee School District should apply for an extension of this waived.

15 responses



What is your stakeholder classification for the McGehee School District?  
(Select all that apply)

15 responses



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Google Forms

## **RESOLUTION OF THE MCGEHEE SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

WHEREAS, the McGehee School District is a public school district in Desha County in the great state of Arkansas; and;

WHEREAS, the McGehee School District recognizes that teachers are the greatest single factor in the learning of the students; and,

WHEREAS, the McGehee School District has enlisted many partners to assist in placing teachers in classrooms; and,

WHEREAS, the McGehee School District is facing extreme challenges employing licensed teachers for all classrooms; and,

WHEREAS, waivers of certain state laws and administrative rules would allow the McGehee school district more flexibility in placing teachers in classrooms; and,

WHEREAS, Act 1240 of 2015, codified at Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-103, allows public school districts to petition the State Board of Education for all or some of the school waivers granted to an open-enrollment public charter school that draws students from the public school districts; and,

WHEREAS, Arkansas Virtual Academy is an open enrollment public character school that draws students from McGehee School District; and,

WHEREAS, the Arkansas State Board of Education granted Arkansas Virtual Academy a series of waivers from the Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing Standards of Accreditation of Arkansas Public Schools and School Districts, inclusive of Standard 1-A.5, DESE Rule for Class Size and Teaching Load, and Title 6 of the Arkansas Code Annotated, including (1) Ark. Code Ann § 6-17-812.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MCGEHEE SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS THAT:

1. Pursuant to Act 1240 of 2015, codified at Ark. Code Ann. § 6-15-103, the McGehee School District Board of Directors is hereby authorized to request the following waivers from the Arkansas State Board of Education be entered through 2026;

- a. Standard 1-A.5 of the Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing Standards of Accreditation of Arkansas Public Schools and School Districts;
- b. DESE Rule for Class Size and Teaching Load

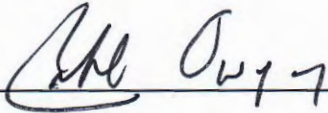
c. Ark. Code Ann. §6-17-812

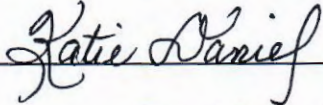
d. Ark. Dept. of Education rules governing Second Semester Interns from accredited colleges

- Standard 1-A.5
- DESE Rules Governing Class Governing Class Size and Teaching Load
- Ark. Code Ann. §6-17-812
- Student Intern (as long-term substitute)

2. The McGehee School District seeks these waivers for July 1, 2021- June 30, 2026.

3. The McGehee School District Board of Directors agreed upon this resolution by vote on October 25, 2021, during an open, regularly scheduled meeting.

By:  10/25/21  
Board President Date

By:  10/25/21  
Board Secretary Date