



Act 1240 Digital Learning Waiver Request

Status: **Submitted to ADE DESE**

 Jasper School District (5102000)

School Year 2021-2022

Applications will be reviewed in the order received. Incomplete applications will be returned to the district.
A notification letter will be sent to the superintendent at the email address listed above upon approval by the Arkansas State Board of Education.
NOTE: The approved application must then be posted on the district website - State Required Information.

District:
LEA #: 5102000
Superintendent: Candra Brasel
Email: candra.brasel@jasper.k12.ar.us
Phone: (870) 446-2001
Duration Requested (not to exceed five years): 1 Year
(School year 2021-2022 to 2022-2023)

The proposed waiver(s) will apply to the following schools:

LEA(s)	Grades/Courses	Interaction	Delivery	Platforms
5102006 - Jasper High School	9-12	Asynchronous	Virtual (Online) / Remote (Distance)	LMS
5102008 - Kingston High School		Synchronous		
5102024 - Oark High School				



Waivers

Waiver Topic	Standard for Accreditation	Division Rules	Arkansas Statutes	Indicate if the district is applying for the waiver and explain how the district waiver will be utilized.
Attendance			6-18-213(a)(2)	Waiver not needed
Class Size Number of students:	1-A.5	DESE Rules Governing Class Size and Teaching Load	6-17-812(a)(2)	Waiver currently granted to Jasper School District with an expiration date of 06/30/2022.
Teaching Load Number of students: 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.	1-A.5	DESE Rules Governing Class Size and Teaching Load	6-17-812	Waiver currently granted to Jasper School District with an expiration date of 06/30/2022.
Six Hour Instructional Day (Waiver applies to virtual/remote students only)	1-A.4.2		6-16-102; 6-16-126	Waiver currently granted to Jasper School District with an expiration date of 06/30/2022.
Clock Hours	1-A.2			Waiver currently granted to Jasper School District with an expiration date of 06/30/2022.



Waiver Topic	Standard for Accreditation	Division Rules	Arkansas Statutes	Indicate if the district is applying for the waiver and explain how the district waiver will be utilized.
Recess (Waiver applies to virtual/remote students only)	1-A.4.3	DESE Rules Governing Nutrition and Physical Activity Standards and Body Mass Index, Section 7.11	6-6-102(a)(5)	Waiver not needed.

Digital Model

Please complete the following application with responses describing the school and district digital programming.

Interaction / Delivery

What are the ways teachers and students will interact with digital content (Synchronous or Asynchronous)? Please describe instructional expectations and participation for students.

Virtual Arkansas is a “high touch” virtual learning experience that harnesses the benefit of synchronous or “live” instruction married with aligned asynchronous courses. This allows for students and instructors to develop relationships, address needed “just-in-time” instruction, and flexibility with learning. At the High School level, students are provided the opportunity to attend two Zoom sessions per week, per content area, and request additional one:one Zoom sessions as needed. While Zoom sessions are not required, they are highly encouraged as empirical data has shown students who attend Zoom are shown to be more successful than students who do not attend Zoom. All students are expected to attend all scheduled Zoom sessions or communicate with the teacher(s) when circumstances prevent them from doing so. Students/teachers are also able to communicate 24/7 via the CANVAS LMS messaging or the SIS email system that is monitored by Virtual Arkansas. Teachers are expected to reply to students within 24 hours of a student communication during the school week. Students are expected to read and interact with messages in their courses on a daily basis during the school week.



What delivery approach will the school or district utilize to meet the needs of both teachers and students (i.e., virtual (online) / remote (distance) or blended (hybrid)? Please explain.

Jasper School District will utilize online virtual remote learning through Virtual Arkansas. Virtual Arkansas utilizes a synchronous and asynchronous approach or true blended model to online learning. Students will engage in their digital coursework through the CANVAS Learning Management System (LMS). Students will have opportunities to engage in synchronous learning through live scheduled Zoom meetings with their teacher. All learning will take place online.

Will teachers be dedicated to primarily remote instruction or serving in a dual role, teaching both remote and in-person learners?
Â *If teachers will serve in a dual role, describe whether it will be simultaneously, meaning remote and in-person at the same time with course/schedule specific considerations.

Jasper School District will be using Virtual Arkansas for its delivery of instruction for our 100% virtual students. Virtual Arkansas provides a fully certified Arkansas teacher of record while we provide the facilitator. Paraprofessionals will be used as facilitators in the JSD. In addition, JSD has one dedicated paraprofessional who will serve as the liaison between students/families and the school. The liaison will make regular contact with students and families and actively monitor student progress in each virtual course. Virtual Arkansas provides training and support for facilitators via the Facilitator Coordinator. This model is a true blended model with synchronous targeted instruction partnered with asynchronous course content and activities. All facilitators at JSD are required to attend facilitator training annually provided by Virtual Arkansas.

Describe the expectation for teacher instruction, interaction, and frequency with virtual students.

For students utilizing Virtual Arkansas courses, teachers actively monitor their courses, provide synchronous sessions and maintain regular communication via the LMS and SIS messaging systems. Each week teachers send a grade report to the student and parent/guardian, and initiate further contact with students demonstrating difficulties with course content. Students are highly encouraged but not required to attend all Zoom sessions. Teachers are continuously provided PD and support for providing engaging and relevant synchronous instruction.



If utilizing district waivers for **class size**, what supports will the district put in place to support the teacher and students? How will the district monitor and determine if the supports are adequate for teachers who exceed class size in digital learning settings?

While JSD currently has approval for class size waiver, this waiver is not needed for our virtual option for the 2021 - 2022 school year as virtual students will be learning remotely from an offsite location.

Supports will be provided to ensure students are successful in their virtual work. Facilitators on each campus as well as our dedicated liaison will actively monitor students progress in all virtual courses and engage in frequent communication with Virtual Arkansas teachers.

If utilizing district waivers for **teaching load**, what supports will the district put in place to support the teacher and students? How will the district monitor and determine if the supports are adequate for teachers who exceed teaching loads in digital learning settings?

While JSD currently has approval for teaching load waiver, this waiver is not needed for our virtual option for the 2021 - 2022 school year as JSD teachers will not be providing virtual instruction. Virtual Arkansas partners with schools to ensure student success. In cases such as ours, where districts use Virtual Arkansas as the only virtual option, teacher training and support is solely the responsibility of Virtual Arkansas. .

By using Virtual Arkansas as the 100% digital learning solution, JSD is minimizing the load/responsibility of instruction for JSD teachers/staff by allowing face to face teachers/staff to focus on those students who are learning onsite.

JSD is committed to the success of our virtual students and therefore through our partnership with Virtual Arkansas, JSD will provide a facilitator per campus as well as a liaison and open lines of communication are expected as it pertains to students and their progress in all courses (synchronous/asynchronous) of instruction.

Technology / Platforms

Identify the learning management system/content management system that schools and districts will use? (Canvas, Buzz, Google Classroom, etc.)

The Canvas Learning Management System (LMS) will be utilized through Virtual Arkansas.



Describe the digital content that will be available to students, including any digital curriculum and supports that are available to teachers. If the district is using a content management system (CMS), please specify grades levels and subjects that the CMS will address.

Virtual Arkansas courses are designed and written by subject matter experts (SME's) and who are Arkansas Certified teachers. Virtual Arkansas courses and content are designed and developed using the Arkansas State Standards, Quality Matters standards, and the National Standards of Quality of Online Courses as their foundation. This process includes an internal review of the courses by Quality Matters certified online course reviewers. Courses are designed to be fully ready for student interaction and teachers have all the content needed to effectively provide support and instruction to students.

What video communication software is required for any remote student? Please describe the video communication software the teacher will use to facilitate live conferences between two or more participants.

Students will be utilizing Zoom video conferencing software to participate in synchronous learning sessions with their teacher. The Zoom software is downloaded to the district provided device. The Virtual Arkansas teacher will utilize Zoom to facilitate synchronous sessions with students during scheduled Zoom sessions during the week. The Zoom link and Zoom schedule is placed in a common location within each course.

Describe the technology access (device and connectivity) that will be provided to each digital learning student to ensure each student receives a free public education.

All virtual learners will be provided a device to work remotely. In addition, those families with limited connectivity will be provided an internet hotspot. Devices will be managed and their use governed by JSD technology policies and all students and families must agree to JSD's use agreement.

Student Supports



Describe the manner and frequency the district or school will use to monitor the wellness and safety (food security, physical, mental health, etc.) of students in a total remote setting. (This may be in-person, video communication, etc.). Identify supports available to assist students within the district.

Virtual Arkansas teachers are trained to employ actions and behaviors to ensure the physical and mental health of students. Virtual Arkansas uses a variety of methods of communication to do this and partners with schools to ensure students are cared for. When a situation arises where intervention is determined to be needed beyond what can be done virtually, Virtual Arkansas will contact the partnering school including the facilitator and counselor to step in to provide intervention. Virtual Arkansas teachers are trained to report any suspected maltreatment/abuse to the Department of Health Services. Additionally, Virtual Arkansas provides ongoing professional development to their teachers to support SEL strategies. When JSD is notified of a situation, the facilitator will immediately notify the appropriate school personnel (principal, counselor, etc). JSD staff are trained in reporting procedures and are required to report situations to appropriate agencies. In addition, JSD has a strong reputation for providing and caring for all students. All practices, procedures, and interventions given to onsite students will be provided to all virtual students as well.

Describe the manner and frequency the district or school will use to monitor the academic and student engagement in a virtual setting. Describe the additional supports available for students struggling with engagement.

Jasper School District has access to the Virtual Arkansas SIS and the CANVAS LMS to monitor students in real time. Virtual Arkansas teachers will initiate intervention when a teacher determines a student isn't actively engaging or successfully mastering the content. In cases where needed, Virtual Arkansas will involve the partnering school through the facilitator, first. Virtual Arkansas will contact administrators if the initial intervention is not successful.

In addition, when students are identified as disengaged or are failing to make sufficient progress in a course(s), students will be given a nine week probationary/support period. During this period, students will be required to report to campus where they will be placed in a virtual learning lab staff by a facilitator where they will be more closely monitored in their virtual work. At the end of the probationary/support period, student progress will be reevaluated. If students have made adequate progress and have achieved a "passing" status in the semester's work, they will be permitted to return to offsite, remote learning. If not, they will be required to return to traditional onsite learning with JSD teachers.



Describe the Academic Response to Intervention plan for remote (virtual) students, including additional supports and personnel.

Additionally, Virtual Arkansas teachers have been trained to identify and intervene with immediacy when a student is determined to not be successful. They are trained to deliver Tier 1 and 2 interventions and, if those are not successful, reach out to the partnering school regarding additional Tier 2 or Tier 3 interventions. Virtual Arkansas also has a PLC structure designed to address intervention with targeted intervention meetings that occur in the 4th and 7th weeks of the 9 weeks.

JSD is committed to the PLC process and works continually to monitor student progress and evaluate individual student data. Virtual students' progress will be evaluated and the same interventions planned for onsite learners will be provided to those virtual students. For many of the Tier II interventions, students will be able to Zoom with JSD interventionists for additional assistance. Should the need arise for Tier III interventions, students will be required to come onsite for those interventions. All intervention groups are fluid and when students are able to demonstrate mastery/proficiency, students will be dismissed from the intervention group.

Describe the district or school's formative assessment plan to support student learning.

Virtual Arkansas courses have periodic formative assessments, checks for understanding, and pre-tests to determine students' mastery of learning throughout the modules of a course that are aligned to the summative module assessments. There are varied methods of assessment utilized both through the asynchronous course with open ended discussions/assessments, choice response activities, multiple choice, and hybrid assessments(open ended and multiple choice). Teachers also use weekly live Zoom to do informal formative checks to ensure clarity for students on asynchronous learning tasks.



Describe how dyslexia screening and services will be provided to digital learning students.

Virtual Arkansas provides accessibility tools to support students with dyslexia including ReadSpeaker that will read any text in the course to students. Virtual Arkansas will provide the needed accommodations/modifications per the individual 504 plan uploaded into the SIS by partnering school.

JSD's digital liaison will communicate with Virtual Arkansas teachers and will be informed if they suspect signs of dyslexia. If so, JSD dyslexia interventionists will be notified and screeners will be scheduled. JSD's dyslexia plan can be found here

https://docs.google.com/document/u/0/d/1wWVScXxuS2jLJn6RzOfJOKeLFn5pDghdnAu4_9PO8hs/edit.

Describe how Gifted and Talented supports and services will be provided to digital learning students.

All current Virtual Arkansas teachers have been trained with the GT Secondary Course Content training and have support for gifted learners provided within the course as well as a representation of those learning offerings for documentation for partnering schools. New hires will also be expected to attain this training if they do not already have it. Additionally, Virtual Arkansas provides student perception surveys sent out each semester asking for student feedback on their learning experience. A parent perceptions survey will be conducted as well. Teachers are also encouraged to do informal surveys with students regarding the course learning experience throughout the year.

Describe how English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL / ESL) supports and services will be provided to digital learning students.

Virtual Arkansas provides accessibility tools to support ESOL/ESL and will provide the needed accommodations/modifications per the individual LEP uploaded into the SIS by partnering schools.



Describe how all Special Education services and supports will be provided to digital learning students, including the process for special education evaluations and conferences.

Virtual Arkansas teachers will provide information for evaluations and conferences when requested. Jasper School District will upload the modification/accommodation sheet to the Student Information System (SIS) within the first 10 days of school or enrollment if enrollment occurs after school begins. Virtual Arkansas courses are designed in such a way that all applicable accommodations/modifications can be met in the course in conjunction with services provided by the partnering school.

Students with active IEP/504 plans will be assigned to a certified Special Education teacher who will manage their case. Conferences and evaluations will be scheduled with certified JSD Special Education teachers, counselors, Virtual Arkansas teachers, and administrators. JSD Special Education teachers will ensure Virtual Arkansas teachers have the most up-to-date IEP/504 accommodation plans and will communicate regularly with those teachers to monitor student progress.

Describe common and frequently used digital accommodations that the district or school has provided to general education teachers to assist students in digital learning classes.

Virtual Arkansas courses meet the guidelines of IDEA and Section 508. All courses are evaluated for accessibility using Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. Additionally, Virtual Arkansas utilizes embedded tools including ReadSpeaker to provide for students who need content read aloud. Virtual Arkansas also follows the Universal Design for Learning Principles to eliminate both visible and invisible barriers to learning.

Teacher Supports

Describe district and school supports to provide on-going digital content and instructional supports for teachers.

Jasper School District will be utilizing Virtual Arkansas as our digital content and digital instruction solution. Virtual Arkansas provides robust online teacher training and development for all new teachers entering the field of online teaching. All Virtual Arkansas teachers are provided both directed/scheduled and embedded professional development activities, book studies, and weekly collaborative teams. Virtual Arkansas provides a team of instructional and digital content experts for just-in-time support for all teachers. Virtual Arkansas also has a team of technology support specialists to assist with any technology issues.



Identify the daily or weekly amount of time teachers will need to develop and plan for instruction based on options selected and digital supports provided. How will the district support teachers with digital content and planning?

Jasper School District will be utilizing Virtual Arkansas for our digital content and digital instruction solution. Virtual Arkansas teachers will utilize curriculum developed by Arkansas subject matter experts (SME's) aligned to Arkansas standards. Schools will provide a facilitator or facilitators, depending upon the number of students, to aid Virtual Arkansas teachers as they provide instruction to the students. Virtual Arkansas will provide training to the partnering school's facilitator(s) and ongoing support to facilitator(s) through Virtual Arkansas' Facilitator Coordinator.

District Supports

Describe how the district will ensure equitable access to opportunities for success for digital learner's needs (poverty, homelessness, migrant, foster care, and military connected students) A link (URL) to the district equity plan may be acceptable if it meets this criteria.

Jasper School District is proud to be known as a district which takes great care of all learners regardless of their unique situations or limitations. JSD will make every attempt to ensure students are provided with resources needed to be successful in our digital learning plan should a family/student request it. Such accommodations include but are not limited to, providing internet access via hotspots, offering onsite use of facilities as needed for students, after hours tutoring, parent involvement activities including training on how to use the resources their child will be using daily, as well as frequent communication with families on progress of their child. In addition, the district employs staff members who serve as liaisons to homeless students, migrant students, as well as poverty stricken families. These staff members will advocate on the students/family's behalf and ensure students are successful in their learning.

Additional equity plans can be found in the student handbook at https://www.jasper.k12.ar.us/plugins/show_image.php?id=1842.

All students are expected to test (statewide summative assessments) onsite as per DESE guidance. Provide an overview of how the district may communicate to parents and test digital learning students at a district site.

Virtual Arkansas requires trained proctors for major assessments. Jasper School District's plan for students to take proctored assessments includes:
Lockdown web browsers
Proctoring of exams through Zoom or onsite

All summative assessments will be given onsite and proctored by appropriate teachers or virtual lab facilitators.



Provide a detailed explanation of how the district will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the digital option(s) and the fidelity of implementation as described within this application.

Virtual Arkansas provides the partnering school with access to the SIS and CANVAS LMS. Facilitators are trained to pull grades from the SIS weekly to monitor student progress. Additionally, parents can access student grades through the Canvas App. Teachers send weekly reports via the SIS messaging that is sent to both student and parent email.

JSD district and building level administrators will review data frequently and determine the effectiveness of the digital program. JSD will provide general expectations to all students and families enrolled and will require students and parents to complete a memorandum of understanding detailing those expectations and best practices.

Describe how the teacher(s) will engage families into the digital learning process. (District may link the District Engagement Plan if digital learning is included. The plan must address how the district will support parents/students with digital tools and resources)

Local school/district/program statement on family engagement

In addition, Virtual Arkansas provides parent/guardian informational webinars throughout the school year for families of students in Virtual Arkansas courses. Virtual Arkansas teachers communicate course and grade updates weekly to parents/guardians with provided email addresses. Parents/guardians are also given access to the Parent Canvas App which allows them to monitor their students activity and grades within the course. Family engagement is highly valued and encouraged throughout the year by providing regular Virtual Arkansas updates, emails from teachers, just in time meetings at the local level, and up to date information on the Virtual Arkansas website, including the Virtual Arkansas Parent Guide (linked here) https://www.virtualarkansas.org/293342_2.

Provide the URL to evidence of the local school board's approval of the waiver request(s).

Jasper School District approved waiver requests as part of the School of Innovation

Provide a URL to evidence of stakeholder feedback regarding the waiver request(s) and the district communication plan regarding digital learning program(s).

Jasper School District, as part of the School of Innovation application and process

Policies

Please provide a link (URL) to the attendance policy for digital learning students.

JSD digital students will follow the attendance policy set forth in the student handbook



Please provide a link (URL) to the discipline policy for digital learning students.

All students in the Jasper School District whether onsite or digital learners will fo

Please provide a link (URL) to the grading policy for digital learning students.

All students in the Jasper School District whether onsite or digital learners will fo

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