

Director's Office
1606 Pine Grove Lane
Harrisburg, AR 72432



Phone: 870-578-5426
Fax: 870-578-5896

Dear Mr. Rhodes,

Please include this start date waiver request with those submitted by Crowley's Ridge Educational Service Cooperative.

The waiver is submitted by the Rivercrest School District. The request is for a waiver of up to five schools days early. A five-year duration is requested. The board resolution and stakeholder feedback are included

Thank you for your review of this waiver request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Pamela Castor".

Pamela Castor, Director
Crowley's Ridge Educational Service Cooperative
1606 Pine Grove Lane
Harrisburg, AR 72432
870-578-5426 (office) 870-578-5896 (fax)
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Craighead County: Bay, Brookland, Buffalo Island Central, Jonesboro, Nettleton, Riverside, Valley View - **Crittenden County:** Earle, Marion - **Cross County:** Cross County, Wynne - **Jackson County:** Newport - **Mississippi County:** Armorel, Blytheville, Gosnell, Manila, Osceola, Rivercrest - **Poinsett County:** East Poinsett County, Harrisburg, Marked Tree, Trumann

"AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER AND EMPLOYER"



**DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY
& SECONDARY EDUCATION**

Act 1240 Waiver Request

District:	Rivercrest School District
LEA Number:	4706000
Superintendent:	Mike Cox
Email:	mike.cox@smccolts.com
Contact for Waiver:	Shantele Raper, Assistant Superintendent
Contact Email:	shantele.raper@smccolts.com
Contact Phone:	870-560-0805
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 Crowley's Ridge Educational 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 2023-2024 school year that date will be Monday, August 19.

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 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 — fall of 2029. This waiver would next year allow school to open 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, fall semester will be 84 days while 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 that semesters are, the greater is the issue for classes that are one semester in length.
- The alternative solution for unbalanced semesters is to not end 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 prior to 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 that play football, this would include students that are participants in groups such as volleyball, band, cheer, Student Council and National Honor Society, as well as others.

The granting of this waiver does not affect any other law, rule or procedure. The school year will remain the same length. It simply allows a district to continue with a school calendar that is structured as closely as possible to the current one, and avoids the dramatic change to the calendar which must result without the waiver.

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

There will not be a loss of services for students under this waiver.

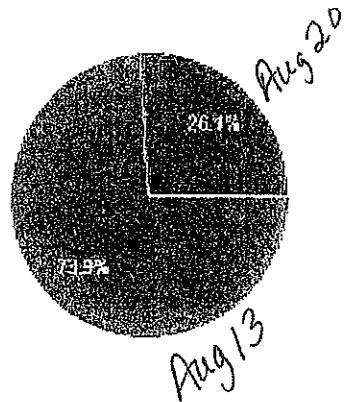
3. Provide a detailed explanation of how the district will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the waiver.

The district will monitor student assessment results and student attendance data related to the earlier start of the school year by no more than five days. The movement of the start date should have a positive effect on state assessment scores and student attendance.

The advantage is having more student instruction days prior to the state assessment.

Please choose your preferred option for first day and last day.

88 responses



- First Day August 13-Last Day May 23
- First Day August 20-Last Day May 30

Rivercrest School District
1700 W State Hwy 14
Wilson, AR 72395
2/14/2024

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF RIVERCREST SCHOOL DISTRICT
AUTHORIZING THE DISTRICT TO REQUEST A WAIVER.**

Whereas, the Rivercrest 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, an ACT 1240 Waiver for A.C.A 6-10-106 which establishes the first allowable day of class as the Monday of the week that contains August 19. This waiver is being request to allow Rivercrest School District's first day of class to be "no earlier than Monday, August 12.

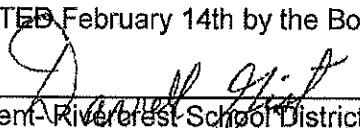
NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of Rivercrest School District hereby authorizes the District administration to formally request a waiver to allow Rivercrest School District's first day of class to be "no earlier than Monday, August 12;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED 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

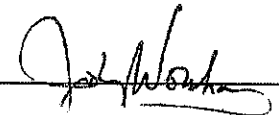
This resolution shall take effect immediately upon adoption.

ADOPTED February 14th by the Board of Directors of Rivercrest School District.



President - Rivercrest School District

ATTEST:



Rivercrest School District Board Meeting

February 13, 2024

AGENDA
Regular Monthly Meeting 5:30 P.M.
Admin Board room

The mission of the Rivercrest School District is to create an environment of high expectations and intensive support in which each student is able to achieve.

- Call to Order
- Review and Approve Agenda
- Review and Approve Minutes for January Regular and Special Board Meeting
- Review and Approve Financial Statement
- Review and Approve Student Achievement Data

- **Action Items**
 - Maternity Leave
 - Makeup Days
 - Submit Waiver to start school on August 13, 2024

- Superintendent Report
 - High Impact Tutoring Grant
 - K-3 Literacy Tutoring
 - Long-term Lease for Solar Energy Development
 - Facility Update

- Personnel
 - Athletics- Bailey Littleton Girls Track, Spring 24- Elea Robertson- Girls and Boys Track Assistant Coach
 - Destiny McNeal-Special Ed Self Contained 24-25 School Year
 - Rehire Administrators: Shantele Raper-Assistant Superintendent, Tena Fleming-District LEA Coordinator, Bill Burfield- High School/ Jr High Principal, Greg Griffin- High School Assistant Principal, Dixie Baker- Elementary Principal, John Burrow- Elementary Assistant Principal

- Adjourn