



# Act 1240 Digital Learning Waiver Request

Status: **Submitted to ADE DESE**

West Fork School District (7208000)

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 #:** 7208000  
**Superintendent:** John Karnes  
**Email:** jkarnes@wftigers.org  
**Phone:** (479) 839-2231 Ext. 5005  
**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
<a href="#">7208060 - West Fork Elementary School</a> <a href="#">7208062 - West Fork High School</a>	K-12	Synchronous	Virtual (Online) / Remote (Distance)	<a href="#">LMS</a> <a href="#">CMS</a>
<a href="#">7208061 - West Fork Middle School</a>				



## 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.
<b>Attendance</b>			6-18-213(a)(2)	



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.
				<p>West Fork School District is requesting a waiver requiring on-campus attendance. With the approval of this waiver students will be allowed to “attend” West Fork School District’s Virtual School through provided technology from home or another location. This does not take away the requirement for documented daily attendance, according to the Attendance guidelines found in the District Student and Parent Handbook. It is required that students access and interact with the online content on a daily basis and participate in the interactive sessions.</p> <p>Students will Google Meet in real time with their teachers during assigned periods. Attendance will be taken by the teacher each period. As usual, parents will be notified of absences and if a student exceeds the number of allowed absences, they will not be allowed to participate virtually.</p> <p>Extenuating circumstances must be communicated and approved through a building administrator to be considered an excused absence and for the missed submission deadline not to count against the student’s allowable absences as defined by the District Student Parent Handbook.</p>



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.
<b>Class Size</b> Number of students:	1-A.5	DESE Rules Governing Class Size and Teaching Load	6-17-812(a)(2)	The district is not requesting a waiver for class size. Class sizes will not exceed DESE limits.
<b>Teaching Load</b> Number of students:	1-A.5	DESE Rules Governing Class Size and Teaching Load	6-17-812	The West Fork School District is not requesting a teaching load waiver as we will not exceed the teaching load.
<b>Six Hour Instructional Day</b> (Waiver applies to virtual/remote students only)	1-A.4.2		6-16-102; 6-16-126	



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.
				<p>West Fork School District is requesting a waiver for the requirements of a six hour instructional day for students enrolled in virtual learning. Students will access courses through Google Meet while off campus and there will be synchronous learning each day with students completing the coursework at their own pace, time and location therefore a student may not engage in learning in the typical time frame of a six hour day as required by an onsite student. If an assignment is given, there might be situations where students log off from the classroom to do work or it might not be necessary to do so in the presence of the teacher. Therefore, this might cut short the 6 hour day, occasionally. This would not be the norm. There would be very few circumstances in which this would be allowed.</p>



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.
Clock Hours	1-A.2			The West Fork School District is requesting a waiver for clock hours as required by law. While students will be required to attend class virtually each day, there might be situations where students logoff to work on assignments. The district is requesting a waiver for clock hours to accommodate the times when students may need to log off of synchronous lessons to complete an assignment.
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)	The district is asking for a waiver for virtual/remote students. The district will encourage students to take required physical activity breaks, but evidence of student participation will not be required to be submitted to the district.

**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.

West Fork School District intends to use a synchronous approach for our digital learning option. At the beginning of each day or period, students will be required to login to their class through Google Meet. It is expected that students will participate in discussion, complete daily classroom assignments, and be on-time for instruction. We have seen through our data that students who participate in live Google Meet sessions are much more successful than those who do not.

Every student has internet access or has the ability to utilize a wi-fi hotspot through the school. Our district has been 1:1 for several years, so we are uniquely prepared to provide our students with technology.

Every student will receive instruction through a licensed teacher in real time. By doing so in real time, students have immediate access to instructors for assistance and feedback. Assignments will be built and posted into Google Classroom for students in grades K-6. Assignments will be built and posted into Moodle for students in grades 7-12.

It is the expectation that the student's learning environment be appropriate. During Google Meet sessions, students should be in a quiet space that is free from distractions for both the virtual and face-to-face student. This means that objectionable, offensive material must not be posted on walls. Additionally, other people shouldn't be present. There shouldn't be background noise, and pets shouldn't be in the stream.

Dress should be appropriate and meet the criteria set forth by the student handbook.

Any violations could result in the student being removed from the Google Meet session. If a student is removed, notification will be sent immediately to the building principal for further action.

Since this will be synchronous instruction, we can guarantee that the Science of Reading requirements will be met utilizing walkthroughs, observations, and reviews of planning documents.

Students participating in band, choir, athletics, or specialized courses that require hands-on learning MUST come to campus if they choose to participate in these courses. These courses will not be available virtually. Classes with state-required labs (i.e. science classes) will require virtual students to attend on lab days as specified by the instructor.

If a student does not login to class, the student is counted absent and the parent will be notified via phone call on each absence. Parent contact will be made on the 2nd unexcused absence, per quarter. On the 4th unexcused absence, students' participation in virtual learning will be suspended and they must return to onsite instruction.



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.

Instruction will be provided to our remote students while also occurring with students in the classroom. The district will utilize Google Meet for our video conferencing software. The data collected during last school year has shown that asynchronous learning has not worked well for our community. While we believe that virtual learning is needed, we think it is best for students to have immediate access each day to teachers and be able to engage in the classroom in real time.

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.

Our teachers will serve in a dual-role for both in-person and remote learners. The reasons for that are as follows:  
  
We do not have a significant number of students who have expressed interest in participating in virtual learning.  
We will not exceed the required teacher load.  
We will not exceed the required classroom size.  
  
The only difference in our virtual plan and our face-to-face instructional plan for this year is that teachers will have to admit students to the Google Meet class at the beginning of each period. Teachers are expected to engage virtual students in their classroom discussions and treat them as if they are in the classroom environment.

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

Teachers and virtual students are expected to engage in class as if the student was in the classroom. Students should participate in discussions, complete daily assignments, and answer questions. Strategies that will help ensure equity and participation in the classroom will be put in place so that all participate in the learning. The various platforms we intend to use also have ways for virtual learners to interact with learning material. Student computer use during instructional time will be monitored by the teachers via GoGuardian and Veyon software purchased by the district.





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?

Not applicable.

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?

Not applicable.

## Technology / Platforms

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

The content management system for our K-6 students will be Google Classroom. Both the content and learning management system for 7-12 students is Moodle.

All materials, lectures, assignments, etc. will be posted into Google Classroom for K-6 and Moodle for 7-12. Parents will be able to monitor grades by accessing HAC.

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.

Our teachers in grades K-12 have access to online digital support for their curriculum. We have digital supports for Benchmark Universe, Pearson enVision Mathematics, Mystery Science, ScootPad, Brainpop, and we are examining our math and science curricula for additional online support. In addition, students will have access to daily lessons that address our essential standards.

Grades K-6 will use Google Classroom and grades 7-12 will use Moodle.

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.

Our district will utilize synchronous Google Meet sessions.

Google Meet has been utilized constantly throughout the pandemic. There are tools within Google Meet that will help to engage the student in classroom discussions. There are polls, chats, whiteboards, screen sharing, hand raising, and more.

In addition to those tools, teachers will implement strategies that will make sure to incorporate virtual students into the classroom setting. Our teachers routinely employ strategies to ensure student participation is equitable.



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.

Our district technology device ratio is 1:1. Each student will be issued a device, both face-to-face students and virtual students. We purchased enough hot spots to ensure that every virtual student in the West Fork School District has the ability to have access to the internet.

All students and teachers of our district have laptops and internet connection, both at work and at home.

## 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.

We have fewer than 20 students (K-12) enrolled in our virtual option.

For students who are participating in our virtual option, there is a once a week Google Meet to meet with the mentor to which they have been assigned. During this time, educators will discuss grades, well-being, mental health, and will look for indicators of concern.

All students will have access to mental health providers and the school counselor. That can be scheduled via Google Meet or face-to-face.

In addition, students can schedule face-to-face meetings with teachers and receive additional help..

Teachers will also be available via phone, email, Class Dojo, or Remind101.

The district will provide breakfast and lunch to students free of charge. We will allow students to pick up meals during our breakfast and lunch times.

Students will be required to participate in BMI, vision, hearing, and scoliosis screenings. Students are allowed to participate in any health related presentation or vaccination clinic that we have during the school year.



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.

Students will be monitored each week through grades, attendance, and quality of work. If students aren't engaged or excelling in their learning, the teacher will notify the administration team. This will be reviewed at their weekly meeting. Discussions and possible RTI placements will be made.

The District administration team will discuss virtual students at their meeting every other week. Students in our RTI program will be monitored closely to ensure progress is being made. All virtual students will be discussed at the District RTI meeting. West Fork School District has hired additional staff to help teachers support virtual students.

Our special education supervisor and teachers will monitor work and assist our SPED students.

When students are placed in Tier II or Tier III of intervention, they will have the option to do so virtually or face-to-face. All tutoring and interventions will be done by a licensed professional.

Students in the virtual program will be held to the same standards of grading as their onsite peers as determined by our district policies. Grades will be monitored weekly for progress. Students who do not demonstrate appropriate growth and/or are missing excessive assignments will be subject to parent notification, required interventions, or removal from the virtual program.

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

Virtual students who are placed in Tier II or Tier III interventions will attend interventions virtually through Google Meet. These students will be monitored the same as the face-to-face students. Qualified personnel will analyze the student's work, grades, interim, and progress monitoring data to determine what interventions need to occur. Adjustments will be made to intervention groups as needed according to the student's progress. Students in Tier II interventions will have this provided by their classroom teacher. Students in Tier III interventions will have interventions provided by interventionists.



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

Virtual students will be required to participate face-to-face in progress monitoring and interim assessments. This will ensure that these assessments are taken in the appropriate environment and the data is valid. Classroom assessments and classwork will be submitted electronically with teacher feedback given regularly and in a timely manner. The focus of our leadership team meetings (district, building, and RTI teams) and our grade/department level staff meetings will be on student data and achievement. By focusing on the data collected around essential standards, this will help drive instruction.

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

Virtual students will be face-to-face for dyslexia screening. They will be screened on the same schedule as the face-to-face students. Dyslexia modifications will be provided by a certified reading interventionist. Dyslexia interventions will be done virtually through Google Meet. The district will ensure all requirements of the dyslexia law are met for on-site and virtual learners by using SPIRE and Sounds Sensible, two programs found on the DESE approved list for dyslexia interventions.

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

Students will be provided GT instruction virtually by the GT teacher. The district will ensure that the GT Program Approval Standards will be met for virtual learners.

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

ESL students will receive support and interventions virtually by the classroom teachers and additional support by the District ESL coordinator as needed. The district will ensure all requirements of the District English Learner plan have been met for on-site and virtual learners.



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

Speech: Students will have the option of receiving speech through Google Meet or coming for face-to-face speech instruction.

Small Group Instruction: The special education teacher will meet with the student using Google Meet.

Students will attend school for PT and/or OT services. Other arrangements can be made for extenuating circumstances.

Special education conferences can be conducted virtually or face-to-face.

Special education evaluations must be done face-to-face.

The district will ensure special education services will follow all rules and regulations for virtual students.

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.

Teachers will use Google Meet and Google Classroom to provide instruction to virtual students.

Students with an IEP or 504 will receive digital accommodations according to their individualized plan. These accommodations include text-to-speech and extended time.

## Teacher Supports

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



# LEA INSIGHTS

Teachers will be trained in all the platforms used with digital students. All of the programs used besides Google Meet will be used with all students whether they are digital or face-to-face. This will ensure that instruction is seamless.

All teachers received initial pre-school training from district staff in the areas of teaching using Google Classroom for K-6 students and teaching using Moodle for all 7-12 teachers. Many of the 7-12 teachers were already proficient in using Moodle from the previous school year. These teachers were able to learn some more advanced uses of Moodle to enhance their instruction, while many were learning the basics of using Moodle for the first time. District support staff was able to differentiate their instruction to meet the needs of both groups of teachers.

The district will provide ongoing, job-embedded professional development focused on content management and instructional practices appropriate for virtual learning. Additionally, all teachers will receive weekly support from within their Professional Learning Communities. Finally, Specialists from the Northwest Education Service Cooperative (NWAESC) will assist all teachers with ongoing support that includes the use of best instructional practices and providing content support as needed.

The district has hired additional staff to provide support to classroom teachers specifically in the area of reading. These additional staff members have been trained in the appropriate LMS as determined by building assignments and provide another layer of virtual instructional support for the teachers.

District staff and the technology department support the teachers by planning, scheduling, and administering state-mandated at school-required assessments for virtual learners, K-12. Additionally, any technology difficulties will be addressed by the office or technology department.



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?

All teachers are provided a minimum of 200 minutes of planning time per week. Planning time will be used to review data, content, assessments, and monitor student progress. Additional release time will be provided as needed to support curriculum, accommodations, technology tools, instructional practices, etc.

All the programs will be used with both face-to-face and virtual students. The amount of additional time used with virtual students should be minimal.

## 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.

The district will provide our remote learners with access to all the needed tools that they will require for virtual learners. In addition, the district will provide all needed training for the digital tools (including internet access) that our families will use.

In order to achieve equitable access, the district will use federal and state funds to provide equitable access to education. Students will have support for general education, special education, GT, and 504 students.

West Fork School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, or disability in any policies, procedures, practices, and educational opportunities.



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.

In the application process, our district made a requirement that all students must take state tests and other needed assessments in a face-to-face environment.

The district will utilize its Blackboard Messaging System to send out emails, texts, Facebook posts and phone messages several weeks in advance of the scheduled testing time to the parents and students. Each student's teacher will also send out reminders.

The day before the tests, responsible parties will call the parent and email the student to remind them of their testing time.

We will allow students to do makeup testing in the event of an absence during testing; however, we will follow the district's protocol for absences. If students are absent from school on days of assigned testing, they will be counted absent. Also, students who do not attend in a reasonable time for testing will be required to return to school and will not be allowed to participate in virtual learning.

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.

Our district leadership team meets once a week. As we have this year, the district will monitor the learning of students based on grades, participation, and various other types of feedback (such as communication with parents). Ultimately, the evidence of student learning isn't a grade, but rather student work and feedback. The leadership team will examine student work to make sure students are being held to rigorous levels of performance in addition to attendance, grades, and classroom participation.

In addition to examining our digital learning plan at our leadership team meetings, our district will also ask parents and students to participate in quarterly surveys. Based upon this feedback and other data, we will make needed adjustments to our program.





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)

Families will be able to engage the district in numerous ways. As per every year, parents will be able to email, request meetings, or call our teachers.

The district will utilize a website ([westforkschools.org](http://westforkschools.org)) for communication with parents.

The district will utilize an automated call/text system to communicate with parents.

Teachers will use apps such as Class Dojo and Remind 101 for communication with parents and students.

The district provides and will continue to provide video updates on Facebook.

The district will also make sure to communicate with families in their language using various translation programs and/or translators.

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

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/16j414yFYZWj1BNm6g6hVweh7A3BxInCO/view?u>

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

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/14fp7auz9hcAtOlenp8OsQXq80asuWj1>

## Policies

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

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1AAJPmFeSJerto4G\\_hmKCMrs63gXINw12](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1AAJPmFeSJerto4G_hmKCMrs63gXINw12)

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

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1AAJPmFeSJerto4G\\_hmKCMrs63gXINw12](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1AAJPmFeSJerto4G_hmKCMrs63gXINw12)

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

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1AAJPmFeSJerto4G\\_hmKCMrs63gXINw12](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1AAJPmFeSJerto4G_hmKCMrs63gXINw12)

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